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THE
NOVELS AND ROMANCES
OF
EDWARD BULWER LYTTON.

LIMITED EDITION.

XIV.

NOVELS OF LIFE AND MANNERS.

VOL. V.

*This Edition is limited to Twelve Hundred and Fifty
Copies, of which this is Number...873.*



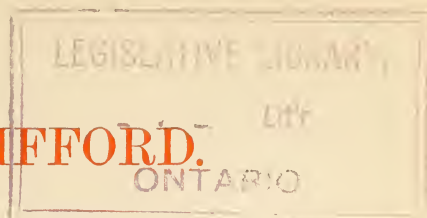
Paul Clifford.

Drawn by Edmund H. Garrett, etched by W. H. W. Bicknell.

PAUL CLIFFORD, I. *Frontispiece.*



51 315



PAUL CLIFFORD.

BY

EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

(LORD LYTTON.)

"Many of your lordships must recollect what used to take place on the high roads in the neighborhood of this metropolis some years ago. Scarcely a carriage could pass without being robbed; and frequently the passengers were obliged to fight with, and give battle to the highwaymen who infested the roads." — *Duke of Wellington's Speech on the Metropolis Police Bill, June 5th. Mirror of Parliament, 1829, p. 2050.*

"Can any man doubt whether it is better to be a great statesman or a common thief?" — *Jonathan Wild.*

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.



NEW YORK:

J. F. TAYLOR AND COMPANY.

1897.

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University Press :
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

TO

ALBANY FONBLANQUE,

WHOSE ACUTENESS OF WIT IS ACKNOWLEDGED BY THOSE
WHO OPPOSE HIS OPINIONS,

WHOSE INTEGRITY OF PURPOSE IS YET MORE RESPECTED BY
THOSE WHO APPRECIATE HIS FRIENDSHIP,

This Work is Inscribed.

JULY, 1840.

INTRODUCTION.

“PAUL CLIFFORD” was meant, the author says, to help on reform in the penal code and in the prison discipline of England. A minor object was to show that vulgar vice and fashionable vice are essentially the same, and that the slang of one circle is but a paraphrase of the cant of the other. In some respects it may be regarded as one of the most felicitous of the author’s early novels. It is characterized throughout by vigor of conception, skill in the portrayal of character, wit, and vivacity of style, and is entirely free from the faults which mar its predecessor. The hero is a striking, if a somewhat self-contradictory character, and some readers will probably agree with the author that Joseph Brandon, the great lawyer and impersonation of scorn, — the crafty hypocrite, who secretly sneers at the dupes he makes, and who views men as only machines, and opinions as ladders, — is the finest character he has ever drawn. Among other felicitous portraitures are those of the weak, quies-

cent brother of Brandon, "who, if not an incomparable citizen, was, at least, an excellent vegetable;" Lucy, his charming daughter; Lord Mauleverer, the old ultra-Tory courtier and aristocratic epicure, the oracle in dress, equipage, cookery, and beauty; Ned Pepper, and Tomlinson, the philosophic knave. In Peter MacGrawler, the critic of the "*Asinæum*," whom Bulwer introduces to satirize one of his reviewers, he has overshot the mark. The caricature is too gross to have any but the faintest verisimilitude.

What is the moral tendency of this story? Is it simply to rouse our indignation against a vicious prison discipline and a sanguinary criminal code, — "the habit of corrupting an offender by the very punishment that ought to redeem him, and then hanging the man, at the first occasion, as the easiest way of getting rid of the blunder"? When Paul Clifford, on his defence at his trial, imputes his crimes to the legislation of his country, — a legislation that sentenced him, unjustly convicted, to herd with hardened offenders, graduates in vice, — we are not surprised. The defence has a certain dramatic propriety, and is just what we should naturally expect. But what are we to think when the author gives his sanction, or semi-sanction, to this defence? So, again, with Tomlinson's disquisitions on the state of society: instead of exposing the sophistries of these "gentlemen highwaymen," the writer appears to sympathize with the indignation with which

they speak of those "laws which oppress the poor," — that is, the punishment inflicted upon thieves and gentlemen of the road. "'Circumstances make guilt,' Clifford was wont to say after his escape from Botany Bay; 'let us endeavor to correct the circumstances, before we rail against the guilt.'" But is it true that any human being is to such an extent the victim of circumstances that he ceases to be a free agent, and is *compelled* to do wrong? If there is any truth to which the consciousness of the whole human race testifies, it is to the falsity of this doctrine, which renders any reasonable theory of criminal law impossible. The word "ought," in such a philosophy, has no place. Who blames or can blame a machine for its acts?

So far are the differences in men's characters from being due to "circumstances" — that is, to heredity and environment — that we daily see persons who are handicapped by both outstrip in life's race men to whom both have been favorable. As from the black mud and foul water where the slimy eel, the speckled frog, and the ugly mud-turtle crawl and swim, — from the same black mud out of which the yellow lily sucks its impure life and noisome odor, — the beautiful, chaste water-lily derives the material of its loveliness, so, in the life of men, some assimilate only what is pure and life-giving from the same moral circumstances which yield to others only pernicious results. But how *can* society "correct the circumstances" which are

supposed to be so fatal to the virtue of certain individuals? What can it do either for its own protection, or to counteract the influence of evil passion and unfavorable circumstances, but to deter men from wrong-doing by its censure and its penal inflictions? The reader of "Paul Clifford" will remember that the hero, who attributes his guilt to corruption by the knaves with whom he was compelled to associate in the Bridewell prison, was sentenced but for three months, and escaped after some weeks. He must have had little moral stamina to be so quickly corrupted, and, on visiting a den of thieves with Tomlinson after his escape, at once to enroll himself in their ranks. The author heads one of his chapters with an aphorism of Bolingbroke, that "man is his own sharper and his own bubble," and with another from Montague, that "the criminal is always a sophist, and finds in his own reason a special pleader to twist laws human and divine into a sanction of his crime," — well-attested truths, which are a sufficient reply to the plea of "circumstances," that great, constant, non-papal, and self-granted indulgence of every villain in the world.

Again, what shall we think of the truth to nature of a romance which portrays in brilliant colors the manners, habits, and modes of life of the meanest, basest, and most dissolute of men; which gives the charm of energy, enthusiasm, and heroism to the conduct of thieves and highwaymen, and by barely hinting at the miseries of such a life gives the im-

pression that it is a merry one? Paul Clifford is a robber, — the captain of a band of highwaymen, who exult in their carousals at the success with which they waylay travellers and plunder them of their money, watches, and jewels, and who commend in song and speech one another's dexterity in these deeds. In their dens and secret retreats their time is spent in drinking brandy or wine (often till they fall drunk under the table), and singing merry staves glorifying their feats as footpads and highwaymen, and extolling the freedom, independence, and delights of their calling. The ringleader of this band of robbers, instead of being depicted as what we know he must inevitably have been, while preying upon the community and breathing the miasma of such a society of villains as his vulgar and profane associates, is endowed not only with a superb and captivating physique, but with many attractive moral qualities. He manifests a generosity in his dealings with his companions, a courtesy and blandness of address in his highway outrages, and a delicacy of feeling and manner and a self-abnegation toward a beautiful girl with whom he is desperately in love, which we know could have no existence under such circumstances. Such a paradox as Paul Clifford — such a harmony of discords — was never known. A high-minded, unselfish highwayman; a tender-hearted and benevolent professional thief; a pure-minded and sentimental debauchee; an intellectual, elegant, chivalric com-

panion of uneducated, dissolute votaries of vice and crime,—is a bundle of contradictions, a mythical being, that has not and never had an existence, save in a romancer's brain.

Again, we know that the "merry life" of the highwayman is a pure fiction. To say nothing of conscience, which may be blunted by the long practice of crime, we know that the fear of detection, and of betrayal by his associates, is always, except when he is besotted with drink, present with him, making a mockery of all enjoyment. The anxiety and alarm, the painful watchings and irksome slavery of crime, the lies and subterfuges to which he is driven, his pitiful shifts for concealment, the worthlessness of his gains for any but sensual enjoyment,—all these immeasurably counterbalance the low, vulgar satisfaction which he finds in his calling. Of this inseparable connection of sin and suffering in the outlaw's life, Bulwer gives us in "Paul Clifford" hardly an inkling. In his rose-colored pictures of that life there is a bravado that knows no fear; a light and buoyant spirit that rises above all apprehension of danger; a delight, an exultation even, in the triumphs of the robber's calling, which is commonly supposed to be the reward only of labor in an honorable pursuit. In describing the captain of the robbers as he waits in ambush with his gang for Lord Mauleverer, the author says: "*Altogether, horseman and horse exhibited a gallant and even a chivalrous appear-*

ance ;” and afterward it is added : “ *We cannot but allow the fascination of that lawless life.*” As if this glamour were not enough, we are told of “one of the most noted *gentlemen highwaymen* of the day,” that when on the gallows, with the rope round his neck, he replied to the clergyman who exhorted him to repent of his ill-spent life : “Ill-spent ! Gad !” (smacking his lips), “*it was delicious !*”

“Paul Clifford” was first published in London, in 1830, by Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley. It was translated into French by V. Boileau, under the direction of P. Lorain, and published in the *Bibliothèque des meilleurs romans étrangers*, in two volumes, 12mo, in Paris, 1858.

W. M.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1840.

THIS novel so far differs from the other fictions by the same author, that it seeks to draw its interest rather from practical than ideal sources. Out of some twelve novels, or romances, embracing, however inadequately, a great variety of scene and character,—from “Pelham” to the “Pilgrims of the Rhine,” from “Rienzi” to the “Last Days of Pompeii,”—“Paul Clifford” is the *only one* in which a robber has been made the hero, or the peculiar phases of life which he illustrates have been brought into any prominent description.

Without pausing to inquire what realm of manners, or what order of crime and sorrow be open to art, and capable of administering to the proper ends of fiction, I may be permitted to observe, that the present subject was selected, and the novel written, with a twofold object:—

First, to draw attention to two errors in our penal institutions,—namely, a vicious prison-discipline and a sanguinary criminal code: the habit of corrupting the boy by the very punishment that ought to redeem him, and then hanging the man, at the first occasion, as the easiest way of getting rid of our own blunders. Be-

tween the example of crime which the tyro learns from the felons in the prison-yard, and the horrible levity with which the mob gather round the drop at Newgate, there is a connection which a writer may be pardoned for quitting loftier regions of imagination to trace and to detect. So far this book is less a picture of the king's highway than the law's royal road to the gallows,—a satire on the short cut established between the house of correction and the condemned cell. A second and a lighter object in the novel of "Paul Clifford" (and hence the introduction of a semi-burlesque or travesty in the earlier chapters), was to show that there is nothing essentially different between vulgar vice and fashionable vice,—and that the slang of the one circle is but an easy paraphrase of the cant of the other.

The supplementary essays, entitled "Tomlinsoniana," which contain the corollaries to various problems suggested in the novel, have been restored to the present edition.

CLIFTON, *July* 25, 1840.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1848.

MOST men who, with some earnestness of mind, examine into the mysteries of our social state, will, perhaps, pass through that stage of self-education in which this novel was composed. The contrast between conventional frauds, received as component parts of the great system of civilization and the less deceptive invasions of the laws which discriminate the *meum* from the *tuum*, is tempting to a satire that is not without its justice. The tragic truths which lie hid in what I may call the philosophy of circumstance, strike through our philanthropy upon our imagination. We see masses of our fellow-creatures—the victims of circumstances over which they had no control—contaminated in infancy by the example of parents, their intelligence either extinguished, or turned against them, according as the conscience is stifled in ignorance, or perverted to apologies for vice. A child who is cradled in ignominy, whose schoolmaster is the felon, whose academy is the house of correction, who breathes an atmosphere in which virtue is poisoned, to which religion does not pierce, becomes less a responsible and reasoning human being than a wild beast which we suffer to range in the

wilderness, till it prowls near our homes, and we kill it in self-defence.

In this respect, the novel of "Paul Clifford" is a loud cry to society to amend the circumstance—to redeem the victim. It is an appeal from humanity to law. And, in this, if it could not pretend to influence or guide the temper of the times, it was at least a fore-sign of a coming change. Between the literature of imagination, and the practical interests of a people, there is a harmony as complete as it is mysterious. The heart of an author is the mirror of his age. The shadow of the sun is cast on the still surface of literature, long before the light penetrates to law. But it is ever from the sun that the shadow falls, and the moment we see the shadow, we may be certain of the light.

Since this work was written, society is busy with the evils in which it was then silently acquiescent. The true movement of the last fifteen years has been the progress of one idea,—social reform. There, it advances with steady and noiseless march behind every louder question of constitutional change. Let us do justice to our time. There have been periods of more brilliant action on the destinies of states; but there is no time visible in history in which there was so earnest and general a desire to improve the condition of the great body of the people. In every circle of the community that healthful desire is astir; it unites in one object men of parties the most opposed; it affords the most attractive nucleus for public meetings; it has cleansed the statute-book from blood; it is ridding the world of

the hangman. It animates the clergy of all sects in the remotest districts; it sets the squire on improving cottages and parcelling out allotments. Schools rise in every village; in books the lightest, the grand idea colors the page, and bequeaths the moral. The government alone (despite the professions on which the present ministry was founded) remains unpenetrated by the common genius of the age. But on that question, with all the subtleties it involves, and the experiments it demands (not, indeed, according to the dreams of an insane philosophy, but according to the immutable laws which proportion the rewards of labor to the respect for property), a government must be formed at last.

There is in this work a subtler question suggested, but not solved. That question which perplexes us in the generous ardor of our early youth, which, unsatisfactory as all metaphysics, we rather escape from than decide as we advance in years,—namely, make what laws we please, the man who lives within the pale can be as bad as the man without. Compare the Paul Clifford of the fiction with the William Brandon: the hunted son, and the honored father; the outcast of the law, the dispenser of the law; the felon, and the judge; and as at the last they front each other, one on the seat of justice, the other at the convict's bar, who can lay his hand on his heart and say, that the Paul Clifford is a worse man than the William Brandon?

There is no immorality in a truth that enforces this question; for it is precisely those offences which society cannot interfere with, that society requires fiction to

expose. Society is right, though youth is reluctant to acknowledge it. Society can form only certain regulations necessary for its self-defence, — the fewer the better: punish those who invade, leave unquestioned those who respect them. But fiction follows truth into all the strongholds of convention, strikes through the disguise, lifts the mask, bares the heart, and leaves a moral wherever it brands a falsehood.

Out of this range of ideas, the mind of the author has, perhaps, emerged into an atmosphere which he believes to be more congenial to art. But he can no more regret that he has passed through it, than he can regret that while he dwelt there, his heart, like his years, was young. Sympathy with the suffering that seems most actual, indignation at the frauds which seem most received as virtues, are the natural emotions of youth, if earnest. More sensible afterwards of the prerogatives, as of the elements, of art, the author at least seeks to escape where the man may not, and look on the practical world through the serener one of the ideal.

With the completion of this work closed an era in the writer's self-education. From "Pelham" to "Paul Clifford" (four fictions, all written at a very early age), the author rather observes than imagines — rather deals with the ordinary surface of human life, than attempts, however humbly, to soar above it or to dive beneath. From depicting in "Paul Clifford" the errors of society, it was almost the natural progress of reflection to pass to those which swell to crime in the solitary human heart, — from the bold and open evils that spring from igno-

rance and example, to track those that lie coiled in the entanglements of refining knowledge and speculative pride. Looking back at this distance of years, I can see, as clearly as if mapped before me, the paths which led across the boundary of invention from "Paul Clifford" to "Eugene Aram." And, that last work done, no less clearly can I see where the first gleams from a fairer fancy broke upon my way, and rested on those more ideal images which I sought, with a feeble hand, to transfer to the "Pilgrims of the Rhine," and the "Last Days of Pompeii." We authors, like the children in the fable, track our journey through the maze by the pebbles which we strew along the path. From others who wander after us, they may attract no notice, or, if noticed, seem to them but scattered by the caprice of chance. But we, when our memory would retrace our steps, review, in the humble stones, the witnesses of our progress, the landmarks of our way.

KNEBWORTH, 1848.



PAUL CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER I.

Say, ye oppressed by some fantastic woes,
Some jarring nerve that baffles your repose,
Who press the downy couch while slaves advance
With timid eye to read the distant glance;
Who with sad prayers the weary doctor tease
To name the nameless, ever-new disease;
Who with mock patience dire complaints endure,
Which real pain, and that alone, can cure:
How would you bear in real pain to lie
Despised, neglected, left alone to die?
How would ye bear to draw your latest breath
Where all that's wretched paves the way to death?

CRABBE.

It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents, — except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies), rattling along the housetops, and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps, that struggled against the darkness. Through one of the obscurest quarters of London, and among haunts little loved by the gentlemen of the police, a man, evidently of the lowest orders, was wending his solitary way. He stopped twice or thrice at different shops and houses of a description correspondent with the appearance of the neighborhood in

which they were situated, and tended inquiry for some article or another which did not seem easily to be met with. All the answers he received were couched in the negative; and as he turned from each door he muttered to himself, in no very elegant phraseology, his disappointment and discontent. At length, at one house, the landlord, a sturdy butcher, after rendering the same reply the inquirer had hitherto received, added, "But if *this* vill do as vell, Dummie, it is quite at your sarvice." Pausing reflectively for a moment, Dummie responded that he thought the thing proffered *might* do as well; and thrusting it into his ample pocket, he strode away with as rapid a motion as the wind and the rain would allow. He soon came to a nest of low and dingy buildings, at the entrance to which, in half-effaced characters, was written "Thames Court." Halting at the most conspicuous of these buildings, an inn or alehouse, through the half-closed windows of which blazed out in ruddy comfort the beams of the hospitable hearth, he knocked hastily at the door. He was admitted by a lady of a certain age, and endowed with a comely rotundity of face and person.

"Hast got it, Dummie?" said she, quickly, as she closed the door on the guest.

"Noa, noa, not exactly; but I thinks as 'ow —"

"Pish, you fool!" cried the woman, interrupting him peevishly. "Vy, it is no use desaving me. You knows you has only stepped from my boosing ken to another, and you has not been arter the book at all. So there's the poor cretur a-raving and a-dying, and you —"

"Let I speak!" interrupted Dummie in his turn. "I tells you, I vent first to Mother Bussblone's, who, I knows, chops the whiners morning and evening to the

young ladies, and I axes there for a Bible, and she says, says she, 'I 'as only a "Companion to the Halter!" but you 'll get a Bible, I thinks, at Master Talkins, the cobbler as preaches.' So I goes to Master Talkins, and he says, says he, 'I 'as no call for the Bible, — 'cause vy? — I 'as a call vithout; but mayhap you 'll be a-getting it at the butcher's hover the vay — 'cause vy? — the butcher 'll be damned!' So I goes hover the vay, and the butcher says, says he, 'I 'as not a Bible; but I 'as a book of plays bound for all the vorld just like un, and mayhap the poor cretur may n't see the difference.' So I takes the plays, Mrs. Margery, and here they be, sure^{ly}! — And how 's poor Judy?"

"Fearsome! she 'll not be over the night, I 'm a-thinking."

"Vell, I 'll track up the dancers!"

So saying, Dummie ascended a doorless staircase, across the entrance of which a blanket, stretched angularly from the wall to the chimney, afforded a kind of screen; and presently he stood within a chamber which the dark and painful genius of Crabbe might have delighted to portray. The walls were whitewashed, and at sundry places strange figures and grotesque characters had been traced by some mirthful inmate, in such sable outline as the end of a smoked stick, or the edge of a piece of charcoal is wont to produce. The wan and flickering light afforded by a farthing candle, gave a sort of grimness and menace to these achievements of pictorial art, especially as they more than once received embellishment from portraits of Satan, as he is accustomed to be drawn. A low fire burned gloomily in the sooty grate; and on the hob hissed "the still, small voice" of an iron kettle. On a round deal table were two phials, a cracked cup, a broken spoon of some dull

metal; and upon two or three mutilated chairs were scattered various articles of female attire. On another table, placed below a high, narrow, shutterless casement (athwart which, instead of a curtain, a checked apron had been loosely hung, and now waved fitfully to and fro in the gusts of wind that made easy ingress through many a chink and cranny), were a looking-glass, sundry appliances of the toilet, a box of coarse rouge, a few ornaments of more show than value, and a watch, the regular and calm click of which produced that indescribably painful feeling which, we fear, many of our readers who have heard the sound in a sick-chamber can easily recall. A large tester-bed stood opposite to this table, and the looking-glass partially reflected curtains of a faded stripe, and, ever and anon (as the position of the sufferer followed the restless emotion of a disordered mind), glimpses of the face of one on whom death was rapidly hastening. Beside this bed now stood Dummie, a small, thin man, dressed in a tattered plush jerkin, from which the rain-drops slowly dripped, and with a thin, yellow, cunning physiognomy, grotesquely hideous in feature, but not positively villanous in expression. On the other side of the bed stood a little boy of about three years old, dressed as if belonging to the better classes, although the garb was somewhat tattered and discolored. The poor child trembled violently, and evidently looked with a feeling of relief on the entrance of Dummie. And now there slowly, and with many a phthisical sigh, heaved towards the foot of the bed the heavy frame of the woman who had accosted Dummie below, and had followed him, *haud passibus æquis*, to the room of the sufferer. She stood with a bottle of medicine in her hand, shaking its contents up and down, and with a kindly yet timid compassion spread over a

countenance crimsoned with habitual libations. This made the scene; save that on a chair by the bedside lay a profusion of long, glossy, golden ringlets, which had been cut from the head of the sufferer when the fever had begun to mount upwards; but which, with a jealousy that portrayed the darling littleness of a vain heart, she had seized, and insisted on retaining near her; and save that, by the fire, perfectly inattentive to the event about to take place within the chamber, and to which we of the biped race attach so awful an importance, lay a large, gray cat, curled in a ball, and dozing with half-shut eyes, and ears that now and then denoted, by a gentle inflection, the jar of a louder or nearer sound than usual upon her lethargic senses. The dying woman did not at first attend to the entrance either of Dummie or the female at the foot of the bed; but she turned herself round towards the child, and, grasping his arm fiercely, she drew him towards her, and gazed on his terrified features with a look, in which exhaustion and an exceeding wanness of complexion were even horribly contrasted by the glare and energy of delirium.

"If you are like *him*," she muttered, "I will strangle you, I will! Ay, tremble, — you ought to tremble when your mother touches you, or when *he* is mentioned. You have his eyes, you have. Out with them, out! — the devil sits laughing in them! Oh! you weep, do you, little one? Well, now, be still, my love, — be hushed! I would not harm thee! harm, — O God, he *is* my child after all!" And at these words she clasped the boy passionately to her breast, and burst into tears.

"Coom now, coom," said Dummie, soothingly; "take the stuff, Judith, and then ve 'll talk over the hurchin."

The mother relaxed her grasp of the boy, and, turning towards the speaker, gazed at him for some moments

with a bewildered stare. At length she appeared slowly to remember him, and said, as she raised herself on one hand, and pointed the other towards him with an inquiring gesture, —

“Thou hast brought the book?”

Dummie answered by lifting up the book he had brought from the honest butcher’s.

“Clear the room, then,” said the sufferer, with that air of mock command so common to the insane. “We would be alone.”

Dummie winked at the good woman at the foot of the bed; and she (though generally no easy person to order or to persuade) left, without reluctance, the sick-chamber.

“If she be a-going to pray,” murmured our landlady (for that office did the good matron hold), “I may indeed as well take myself off; for it’s not werry comfortable like to those who be old to hear all that ’ere.”

With this pious reflection the hostess of the “Mug,” so was the hostelry called, heavily descended the creaking stairs.

“Now, man!” said the sufferer, sternly: “swear that you will never reveal, — swear, I say! and by the great God, whose angels are about this night, if ever you break the oath, I will come back and haunt you to your dying day!”

Dummie’s face grew pale, for he was superstitiously affected by the vehemence and the language of the dying woman, and he answered, as he kissed the pretended Bible, that he swore to keep the secret, as much as he knew of it, which, she must be sensible, he said, was very little. As he spoke, the wind swept with a loud and sudden gust down the chimney, and shook the roof above them so violently as to loosen many of the crum-

bling tiles, which fell one after the other with a crashing noise on the pavement below. Dummie started in affright; and perhaps his conscience smote him for the trick he had played with regard to the false Bible. But the woman, whose excited and unstrung nerves led her astray from one subject to another with preternatural celerity, said, with an hysterical laugh, "See, Dummie, they come in state for me, give me the cap, — yonder, and bring the looking-glass!"

Dummie obeyed, and the woman, as she in a low tone uttered something about the unbecoming color of the ribbons, adjusted the cap on her head, and then saying, in a regretful and petulant voice, "Why should they have cut off my hair? — such a disfigurement!" bade Dummie desire Mrs. Margery once more to ascend to her.

Left alone with her child, the face of the wretched mother softened as she regarded him, and all the levities and all the vehemences — if we may use the word — which, in the turbulent commotion of her delirium, had been stirred upward to the surface of her mind, gradually now sank, as death increased upon her, and a mother's anxiety rose to the natural level from which it had been disturbed and abased. She took the child to her bosom, and clasping him in her arms, which grew weaker with every instant, she soothed him with the sort of chant which nurses sing over their untoward infants; but the voice was cracked and hollow, and as she felt it was so, the mother's eyes filled with tears. Mrs. Margery now re-entered; and, turning towards the hostess with an impressive calmness of manner which astonished and awed the person she addressed, the dying woman pointed to the child, and said, —

"You have been kind to me, very kind, and may

Heaven bless you for it! I have found that those whom the world calls the worst are often the most *human*. But I am not going to thank you as I ought to do, but to ask of you a last and exceeding favor. Protect my child till he grows up: you have often said you loved him, — you are childless yourself; and a morsel of bread and a shelter for the night, which is all I ask of you to give him, will not impoverish more legitimate claimants!”

Poor Mrs. Margery, fairly sobbing, vowed she would be a mother to the child, and that she would endeavor to rear him honestly, though a public-house was not, she confessed, the best place for good examples.

“Take him!” cried the mother, hoarsely, as her voice, failing her strength, rattled indistinctly, and almost died within her. “Take him, rear him as you will, as you can — any example, any roof better than —” Here the words were inaudible. “And, oh! may it be a curse, and a — Give me the medicine, I am dying.”

The hostess, alarmed, hastened to comply, but before she returned to the bedside the sufferer was insensible, — nor did she again recover speech or motion. A low and rare moan only testified continued life; and within two hours the moan ceased, and the spirit was gone. At that time our good hostess was herself beyond the things of this outer world, having supported her spirits during the vigils of the night with so many little liquid stimulants, that they finally sank into that torpor which generally succeeds excitement. Taking, perhaps, advantage of the opportunity which the insensibility of the hostess afforded him, Dummie, by the expiring ray of the candle that burned in the death-chamber, hastily opened a huge box (which was generally concealed under the bed, and contained the wardrobe of the deceased),

and, with irreverent hand, turned over the linens and the silks, until, quite at the bottom of the trunk, he discovered some packets of letters; these he seized and buried in the conveniences of his dress. He then, rising and replacing the box, cast a longing eye towards the watch on the toilet-table, which was of gold; but he withdrew his gaze, and, with a querulous sigh, observed to himself, "The old blowen kens o' that, od rat her! but, howsomever, I'll take this; who knows but it may be of sarvice, — *tannies* to-day may be *smash* to-morrow!"¹ and he laid his coarse hand on the golden and silky tresses we have described. "'T is a rum business, and puzzles I! but mum 's the word for my own little colquarren."²

With this brief soliloquy Dummie descended the stairs, and let himself out of the house.

¹ Meaning what is of no value now may be precious hereafter.

² Colquarren — neck.

CHAPTER II.

Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlor splendors of that festive place.

Deserted Village.

THERE is little to interest in a narrative of early childhood, unless, indeed, one were writing on education. We shall not, therefore, linger over the infancy of the motherless boy left to the protection of Mrs. Margery Lobkins, or, as she was sometimes familiarly called, Peggy or Piggy Lob. The good dame, drawing a more than sufficient income from the profits of a house which, if situated in an obscure locality, enjoyed very general and lucrative repute; and, being a lone widow, without kith or kin, had no temptation to break her word to the deceased, and she suffered the orphan to wax in strength and understanding until the age of twelve, a period at which we are now about to re-introduce him to our readers.

The boy evinced great hardihood of temper, and no inconsiderable quickness of intellect. In whatever he attempted, his success was rapid, and a remarkable strength of limb and muscle seconded well the dictates of an ambition turned, it must be confessed, rather to physical than mental exertion. It is not to be supposed, however, that his boyish life passed in unbroken tranquillity. Although Mrs. Lobkins was a good woman on the whole, and greatly attached to her *protégé*, she was violent and rude in temper, or, as she herself more flatteringly expressed it, "her feelings were unkinmoaly

strong," and alternate quarrel and reconciliation constituted the chief occupations of the *protégé's* domestic life. As, previous to his becoming the ward of Mrs. Lobkins, he had never received any other appellation than "the child," so the duty of christening him devolved upon our hostess of the "Mug;" and, after some deliberation, she blessed him with the name of Paul, — it was a name of happy omen, for it had belonged to Mrs. Lobkins's grandfather, who had been three times transported, and twice hanged (at the first occurrence of the latter description, he had been restored by the surgeons, much to the chagrin of a young anatomist, who was to have had the honor of cutting him up). The boy did not seem likely to merit the distinguished appellation he bore, for he testified no remarkable predisposition to the property of other people. Nay, although he sometimes emptied the pockets of any stray visitor to the coffee-room of Mrs. Lobkins, it appeared an act originating rather in a love of the frolic, than a desire of the profit; for, after the plundered person had been sufficiently tormented by the loss, haply of such utilities as a tobacco-box or a handkerchief, — after he had, to the secret delight of Paul, searched every corner of the apartment, stamped and fretted, and exposed himself by his petulance to the bitter objurgation of Mrs. Lobkins, — our young friend would quietly and suddenly contrive that the article missed should return of its own accord to the pocket from which it had disappeared. And thus, as our readers have doubtless experienced, when they have disturbed the peace of a whole household for the loss of some portable treasure which they themselves are afterwards discovered to have mislaid, the unfortunate victim of Paul's honest ingenuity, exposed to the collected indignation of the spectators, and sinking from the ac-

cuser into the convicted, secretly cursed the unhappy lot which not only vexed him with the loss of his property, but made it still more annoying to recover it.

Whether it was that, on discovering these pranks, Mrs. Lobkins trembled for the future bias of the address they displayed, or whether she thought that the folly of thieving without gain required speedy and permanent correction, we cannot decide; but the good lady became at last extremely anxious to secure for Paul the blessings of a liberal education. The key of knowledge (the art of reading) she had, indeed, two years prior to the present date, obtained for him, — but this far from satisfied her conscience; nay, she felt that if she could not also obtain for him the discretion to use it, it would have been wise even to have withheld a key which the boy seemed perversely to apply to all locks but the right one. In a word, she was desirous that he should receive an education far superior to those whom he saw around him. And, attributing, like most ignorant persons, too great advantages to learning, she conceived that in order to live as decorously as the parson of the parish, it was only necessary to know as much Latin.

One evening in particular, as the dame sat by her cheerful fire, this source of anxiety was unusually active in her mind, and ever and anon she directed unquiet and restless glances towards Paul, who sat on a form at the opposite corner of the hearth, diligently employed in reading the life and adventures of the celebrated Richard Turpin. The form on which the boy sat was worn to a glassy smoothness, save only in certain places where some ingenious idler or another had amused himself by carving sundry names, epithets, and epigrammatic niceties of language. It is said that the organ of carving upon wood is prominently developed on all English

skulls; and the sagacious Mr. Combe has placed this organ at the back of the head, in juxtaposition to that of destructiveness, which is equally large among our countrymen, as is notably evinced upon all railings, seats, temples, and other things, — belonging to other people.

Opposite to the fireplace was a large deal table, at which Dummie, surnamed Dunnaker, seated near the dame, was quietly ruminating over a glass of hollands-and-water. Farther on, at another table in the corner of the room, a gentleman with a red wig, very rusty garments, and linen which seemed as if it had been boiled in saffron, smoked his pipe, apart, silent, and apparently plunged in meditation. This gentleman was no other than Mr. Peter MacGrawler, the editor of a magnificent periodical, entitled the “Asinaeum,” which was written to prove that whatever is popular is necessarily bad, — a valuable and recondite truth, which the “Asinaeum” had satisfactorily demonstrated by ruining three printers and demolishing a publisher. We need not add that Mr. MacGrawler was Scotch by birth, since we believe it is pretty well known that *all* periodicals of this country have, from time immemorial, been monopolized by the gentlemen of the land of cakes: we know not how it may be the fashion to eat the said cakes in Scotland, but *here* the good emigrators seem to like them carefully buttered on both sides. By the side of the editor stood a large pewter tankard; above him hung an engraving of the “wonderfully fat boar, formerly in the possession of Mr. Fattem, grazier.” To his left, rose the dingy form of a thin, upright clock in an oaken case; beyond the clock, a spit and a musket were fastened in parallels to the wall. Below those twin emblems of war and cookery were four shelves, containing plates of pewter and delf, and terminating, centaur-like,

in a sort of dresser. At the other side of these domestic conveniences was a portrait of Mrs. Lobkins, in a scarlet body, and a hat and plume. At the back of the fair hostess stretched the blanket we have before mentioned. As a relief to the monotonous surface of this simple screen, various ballads and learned legends were pinned to the blanket. There might you read, in verses pathetic and unadorned, how

“Sally loved a sailor lad
As fought with famous Shovel!”

There might you learn, if of two facts so instructive you were before unconscious, that

“Ben the toper loved his bottle, —
Charley only loved the lasses!”

When of these, and various other poetical effusions, you were somewhat wearied, the literary fragments, in humbler prose, afforded you equal edification and delight. There might you fully enlighten yourself as to the “Strange and Wonderful News from Kensington, being a most full and true Relation how a Maid there is supposed to have been carried away by an Evil Spirit, on Wednesday, 15th of April last, about Midnight.” There, too, no less interesting and no less veracious, was that uncommon anecdote, touching the chief of many-throned powers, entitled, “The Divell of Mascon; or the true Relation of the Chief Things which an Unclean Spirit did and said at Mascon, in Burgundy, in the house of one Mr. Francis Pereaud: now made English by One that hath a Particular Knowledge of the Truth of the Story.”

Nor were these materials for satanic history the only prosaic and faithful chronicles which the bibliothecal blanket afforded: equally wonderful, and equally indis-

putable, was the account of "a young lady, the daughter of a duke, with three legs, and the face of a porcupine." Nor less so, "The Awful Judgment of God upon Swearers, as exemplified in the case of John Stiles, who dropped down dead after swearing a great oath, and on stripping the unhappy man, they found 'Swear not at all' written on the tail of his shirt!"

Twice had Mrs. Lobkins heaved a long sigh, as her eyes turned from Paul to the tranquil countenance of Dummie Dunnaker, and now, resettling herself in her chair, as a motherly anxiety gathered over her visage, —

"Paul, my ben cull," said she, "what gibberish hast got there?"

"Turpin, *the great* highwayman!" answered the young student, without lifting his eyes from the page, through which he was spelling his instructive way.

"Oh! he be's a chip of the right block, dame!" said Mr. Dunnaker, as he applied his pipe to an illumined piece of paper. "He 'll ride a 'oss foaled by a hacorn yet, I varrants!"

To this prophecy the dame replied only with a look of indignation, and, rocking herself to and fro in her huge chair, she remained for some moments in silent thought. At last she again wistfully eyed the hopeful boy, and, calling him to her side, communicated some order, in a dejected whisper. Paul, on perceiving it, disappeared behind the blanket, and presently returned with a bottle and a wine-glass. With an abstracted gesture, and an air that betokened continued meditation, the good dame took the inspiring cordial from the hand of her youthful cup-bearer,

"And ere a man had power to say, 'Behold!'

The jaws of Lobkins had devoured it up:

So quick bright things come to confusion!"

The nectarian beverage seemed to operate cheerily on the matron's system; and, placing her hand on the boy's curling head, she said (like Andromache, *δακρύνειν γελάσασα*; or, as Scott hath it, "With a smile in her cheek, but a tear in her eye"),—

"Paul, thy heart be good! thy heart be good!—Thou didst not spill a drop of the *tape*! Tell me, my honey, why didst thou lick Tom Tobyson?"

"Because," answered Paul, "he said as how you ought to have been hanged long ago!"

"Tom Tobyson is a good-for-naught," returned the dame, "and *deserves to shove the tumbler*;¹ but, oh, my child! be not too venturesome in taking up the sticks for a blowen. It has been the ruin of many a man afore you; and when two men goes to quarrel for a 'oman, they does n't know the natur of the thing they quarrels about. Mind thy latter end, Paul, and reverence the old, without axing what they has been before they passed into the wale of years. Thou mayst get me my pipe, Paul,—it is upstairs under the pillow."

While Paul was accomplishing this errand, the lady of the "Mug," fixing her eyes upon Mr. Dunnaker, said, "Dummie, Dummie, if little Paul should come to be scragged!"

"Whish!" muttered Dummie, glancing over his shoulder at MacGrawler; "mayhap that gemman,"—here his voice became scarcely audible, even to Mrs. Lobkins; but his whisper seemed to imply an insinuation that the illustrious editor of the "*Asinæum*" might be either an informer, or one of those heroes on whom an informer subsists.

Mrs. Lobkins's answer, couched in the same key, appeared to satisfy Dunnaker; for, with a look of great

¹ Be whipped at the cart's tail.

contempt, he chucked up his head, and said, "Oho! that be all, be it!"

Paul here reappeared with the pipe, and the dame, having filled the tube, leaned forward, and lighted the Virginian weed from the *blower* of Mr. Dunnaker. As in this interesting occupation the heads of the hostess and the guest approached each other, the glowing light playing cheerily on the countenance of each, there was an honest simplicity in the picture that would have merited the racy and vigorous genius of a Cruikshank. As soon as the Promethean spark had been fully communicated to the lady's tube, Mrs. Lobkins, still possessed by the gloomy idea she had conjured up, repeated, —

"Ah, Dummie, if little Paul should be scragged!" Dummie, withdrawing the pipe from his mouth, heaved a sympathizing puff, but remained silent; and Mrs. Lobkins, turning to Paul, who stood with mouth open and ears erect at this boding ejaculation, said, —

"Dost think, Paul, they 'd have the heart to hang thee?"

"I think they 'd have the rope, dame!" returned the youth.

"But you need not go for to run your neck into the noose!" said the matron; and then, inspired by the spirit of moralizing, she turned round to the youth, and, gazing upon his attentive countenance, accosted him with the following admonitions: —

"Mind thy kittychism, child, and reverence old age. Never steal, 'specially when any one be in the way. Never go snacks with them as be older than you, — 'cause why? — the older a cove be, the more he cares for his self and the less for his partner. At twenty we diddles the public, — at forty we diddles our cronies! Be

modest, Paul, and stick to your situation in life. Go not with fine toby-men, who burn out like a candle wot has a thief in it,—all flare and gone in a whiffy! Leave liquor to the aged, who can't do without it. *Tupe* often proves a halter, and there be's no ruin like blue ruin! Read your Bible, and talk like a pious un: people goes more by your words than your actions. If you wants what is not your own, try and do without it; and if you cannot do without it, take it away by insinuation, not bluster. They as swindles does more and risks less than they as robs; and if you cheats toppingly, you may laugh at the topping cheat.¹ And now go play."

Paul seized his hat, but lingered; and the dame, guessing at the signification of the pause, drew forth and placed in the boy's hand the sum of five halfpence and one farthing. "There, boy," quoth she, — and she stroked his head fondly when she spoke, — "you does right not to play for nothing, it's loss of time! but play with those as be less than yoursel', and then you can go for to beat 'em if they says you go for to cheat!"

Paul vanished; and the dame, laying her hand on Dummie's shoulder, said, —

"There be nothing like a friend in need, Dummie; and, somehow or other, I thinks as how you knows more of the horrigin of that 'ere lad than any of us!"

"Me, dame!" exclaimed Dummie, with a broad gaze of astonishment.

"Ah, you! you knows as how the mother saw more of you just afore she died than she did of e'er one of us. Noar, now,—noar, now! tell us all about un. Did she steal un, think ye?"

¹ Gallows.

"Lauk, Mother Margery! dost think I knows? Vot put such a crotchet in your 'ead?"

"Well!" said the dame, with a disappointed sigh, "I always thought as how you were more knowing about it than you owns. Dear, dear, I shall never forgit the night when Judith brought the poor cretur here. You knows she had been some months in my house afore ever I see'd the urchin, and when she brought it she looked so pale and ghostly, that I had not the heart to say a word, so I stared at the brat, and it stretched out its wee little hands to me. And the mother frowned at it, and throwed it into my lap."

"Ah! she was a hawful voman, that 'ere!" said Dummie, shaking his head. "But howsomever, the hurchin fell into good hands; for I be's sure you 'as been a better mother to un than the raal un."

"I was always a fool about childer," rejoined Mrs. Lobkins; "and I thinks as how little Paul was sent to be a comfort to my latter end. Fill the glass, Dummie."

"I 'as heard as 'ow Judith was once blowen to a great lord," said Dummie.

"Like enough!" returned Mrs. Lobkins, — "like enough! She was always a favorite of mine, for she had a spuret [spirit] as big as my own; and she paid her rint like a decent body, for all she was out of her sinses, or nation like it."

"Ay, I *knows* as how you liked her, — 'cause vy? — 't is not your vay to let a room to a voman. You says as how 't is not respectable, and you only likes *men* to visit the 'Mug!'"

"And I does n't like all of them as comes here," answered the dame; "'specially for Paul's sake: but what can a lone 'oman do? Many 's the gentleman highway-

man wot comes here, whose money is as good as the clerk's of the parish. And when a bob¹ is in my hand, what does it sinnify whose hand it was in afore?"

"That 's what I call being sinnible and *practical*," said Dummie, approvingly. "And arter all, though you 'as a mixture like, I does not know a halehouse where a cove is better entertained, nor meets of a Sunday more illegant company, than the 'Mug!' "

Here the conversation, which, the reader must know, had been sustained in a key inaudible to a third person, received a check from Mr. Peter MacGrawler, who, having finished his reverie and his tankard, now rose to depart. First, however, approaching Mrs. Lobkins, he observed that he had gone on credit for some days, and demanded the amount of his bill. Glancing towards certain chalk hieroglyphics inscribed on the wall at the other side of the fireplace, the dame answered that Mr. MacGrawler was indebted to her for the sum of one shilling and ninepence three farthings.

After a short preparatory search in his waistcoat-pockets, the critic hunted into one corner a solitary half-crown, and having caught it between his finger and thumb, he gave it to Mrs. Lobkins, and requested change.

As soon as the matron felt her hand anointed with what has been called by some ingenious Johnson of St. Giles's, "the oil of palms," her countenance softened into a complacent smile; and when she gave the required change to Mr. MacGrawler, she graciously hoped as how he would recommend the "Mug" to the public.

"That you may be sure of," said the editor of the "Asinæum;" "there is not a place where I am so much at home."

¹ Shilling.

With that the learned Scotsman buttoned his coat and went his way.

"How spiteful the world be!" said Mrs. Lobkins, after a pause, "'specially if a 'oman keeps a fashionable sort of a public! When Judith died, Joe, the dogs'-meat man, said I war all the better for it, and that she left I a treasure to bring up the urchin. One would think a thumper makes a man richer, — 'cause why? — every man *thumps*! I got nothing more than a watch and ten guineas when Judy died, and sure that scarce paid for the burrel [burial]."

"You forgits the two *quids*¹ I giv' you for the hold box of rags: much of a treasure I found there!" said Dummie, with sycophantic archness.

"Ay," cried the dame, laughing, "I fancies you war not pleased with the bargain. I thought you war too old a rag-merchant to be so free with the blunt: howsomever, I supposes it war the tinsel petticoat as took you in."

"As it has mony a viser man than the like of I," rejoined Dummie, who, to his various secret professions, added the ostensible one of a rag-merchant and dealer in broken glass.

The recollection of her good bargain in the box of rags, opened our landlady's heart.

"Drink, Dummie," said she, good-humoredly, — "drink; I scorns to score lush to a friend."

Dummie expressed his gratitude, — refilled his glass; and the hospitable matron, knocking out from her pipe the dying ashes, thus proceeded: —

"You sees, Dummie, though I often beats the boy, I loves him as much as if I war his raal mother. I wants to make him an honor to his country and an ixception to my family."

¹ Guineas.

"Who all flashed their ivories at Surgeons' Hall!" added the metaphorical Dummie.

"True!" said the lady; "they died game, and I ben't ashamed of 'em. But I owes a duty to Paul's mother, and I wants Paul to have a long life. I would send him to school, but you knows as how the boys only corrupt one another. And so, I should like to meet with some decent man as a tutor, to teach the lad Latin and vartue!"

"My eyes!" cried Dummie, aghast at the grandeur of this desire.

"The boy is 'cute enough, and he loves reading," continued the dame. "But I does not think the books he gets hold of will teach him the way to grow old."

"And 'ow came he to read anyhow?"

"Ranting Rob, the strolling player, taught him his letters, and said he'd a deal of janius!"

"And why should not Ranting Rob tache the boy Latin and vartue?"

"'Cause Ranting Rob, poor fellow, *was lagged for doing a panny!*"¹ answered the dame, despondently.

There was a long silence: it was broken by Mr. Dummie. Slapping his thigh with the gesticulatory vehemence of a Ugo Foscolo, that gentleman exclaimed, —

"*I 'as it*, — I 'as thought of a tutor for leetle Paul!"

"Who's that? — you quite frightens me; you 'as no marcy on my narves," said the dame, fretfully.

"Vy, it be the gemman vot writes," said Dummie, putting his finger to his nose, — "the gemman vot payed you so flashly!"

"What! the Scotch gemman?"

¹ Transported for burglary.

"The werry same!" returned Dummie.

The dame turned in her chair, and refilled her pipe. It was evident from her manner that Mr. Dunnaker's suggestion had made an impression on her. But she recognized two doubts as to its feasibility: one, whether the gentleman proposed would be adequate to the task; the other, whether he would be willing to undertake it.

In the midst of her meditations on this matter, the dame was interrupted by the entrance of certain claimants on her hospitality; and Dummie soon after taking his leave, the suspense of Mrs. Lobkins's mind touching the education of little Paul, remained the whole of that day and night utterly unrelieved.

CHAPTER III.

I own that I am envious of the pleasure you will have in finding yourself more learned than other boys, — even those who are older than yourself! What honor this will do you! What distinctions, what applauses will follow wherever you go! — LORD CHESTERFIELD'S *Letters to his Son*.

Example, my boy, — example is worth a thousand precepts. — MAXIMILIAN SOLEMN.

TARPEIA was crushed beneath the weight of ornaments! The language of the vulgar is a sort of Tarpeia! We have, therefore, relieved it of as many gems as we were able; and, in the foregoing scene, presented it to the gaze of our readers *simplex munditiis*. Nevertheless, we could timidly imagine some gentler beings of the softer sex rather displeased with the tone of the dialogue we have given, did we not recollect how delighted they are with the provincial barbarities of the sister kingdom, whenever they meet them poured over the pages of some Scottish story-teller. As, unhappily for mankind, *broad* Scotch is not *yet* the universal language of Europe, we suppose our countrywomen will not be much more unacquainted with the dialect of their own lower orders, than with that which breathes nasal melodies over the paradise of the North.

It was the next day, at the hour of twilight, when Mrs. Margery Lobkins, after a satisfactory *tête-à-tête* with Mr. MacGrawler, had the happiness of thinking that she had provided a tutor for little Paul. The critic having recited to her a considerable portion of

Propria quæ maribus, the good lady had no longer a doubt of his capacities for teaching; and, on the other hand, when Mrs. Lobkins entered on the subject of remuneration, the Scotsman professed himself perfectly willing to teach any and everything that the most exacting guardian could require. It was finally settled that Paul should attend Mr. MacGrawler two hours a day; that Mr. MacGrawler should be entitled to such animal comforts of meat and drink as the "Mug" afforded, and, moreover, to the weekly stipend of two shillings and sixpence,—the shillings for instruction in the classics, and the sixpence for all other humanities, or, as Mrs. Lobkins expressed it, "Two bobs for the Latin, and a sice for the vartue!"

Let not thy mind, gentle reader, censure us for a deviation from probability, in making so excellent and learned a gentleman as Mr. Peter MacGrawler, the familiar guest of the lady of the "Mug." First, thou must know that our story is cast in a period antecedent to the present, and one in which the old jokes against the circumstances of author and of critic had their foundation in truth; secondly, thou must know, that by some curious concatenation of circumstances, neither bailiff nor bailiff's man was ever seen within the four walls continent of Mrs. Margery Lobkins; thirdly, the "Mug" was nearer than any other house of public resort to the abode of the critic; fourthly, it afforded excellent porter; and, fifthly,—O reader, thou dost Mrs. Margery Lobkins a grievous wrong, if thou supposest that her door was only open to those mercurial gentry who are afflicted with the morbid curiosity to pry into the mysteries of their neighbors' pockets:—other visitors of fair repute were not unoften partakers of the good matron's hospitality; although it must be owned that

they generally occupied *the* private room in preference to the public one. And, sixthly, sweet reader (we grieve to be so prolix), we would just hint to thee that Mr. MacGrawler was one of those vast-minded sages who, occupied in contemplating morals in the great scale, do not fritter down their intellects by a base attention to minute details. So that, if a descendant of Langfanger did sometimes cross the venerable Scot in his visit to the "Mug," the apparition did not revolt that benevolent moralist so much as, were it not for the above hint, thy ignorance might lead thee to imagine.

It is said that Athenodorus, the Stoic, contributed greatly by his conversation to amend the faults of Augustus, and to effect the change visible in that fortunate man, after his accession to the Roman empire. If this be true, it may throw a new light on the character of Augustus, and, instead of being the hypocrite, he was possibly the convert. Certain it is, that there are few vices which cannot be conquered by wisdom: and yet, melancholy to relate, the instructions of Peter MacGrawler produced but slender amelioration in the habits of the youthful Paul. That ingenious stripling had, we have already seen, under the tuition of Ranting Rob, mastered the art of reading; nay, he could even construct and link together certain curious pot-hooks, which himself and Mrs. Lobkins were wont graciously to term "writing." So far, then, the way of MacGrawler was smoothed and prepared.

But, unhappily, all experienced teachers allow that the main difficulty is not to learn, but to unlearn; and the mind of Paul was already occupied by a vast number of heterogeneous miscellanies which stoutly resisted the ingress either of Latin or of virtue. Nothing could

wear him from an ominous affection for the history of Richard Turpin: it was to him what, it has been said, the Greek authors should be to the academician, — a study by day and a dream by night. He was docile enough during lessons, and sometimes even too quick in conception for the stately march of Mr. MacGrawler's intellect. But it not unfrequently happened that when that gentleman attempted to rise, he found himself, like the lady in "Comus," adhering to —

"A venomed seat,
Smeared with gums of glutinous heat;"

or his legs had been secretly united under the table, and the tie was not to be broken without overthrow to the superior powers; these, and various other little sportive machinations, wherewith Paul was wont to relieve the monotony of literature, went far to disgust the learned critic with his undertaking. But "the tape" and the treasury of Mrs. Lobkins re-smoothed, as it were, the irritated bristles of his mind, and he continued his labors with this philosophical reflection: "Why fret myself? — if a pupil turn out well, it is clearly to the credit of his master; if not, to the disadvantage of himself." Of course, a similiar suggestion never forced itself into the mind of Dr. Keate.¹ At Eton the very soul of the honest head-master is consumed by his zeal for the welfare of little gentlemen in stiff cravats.

But to Paul, who was predestined to enjoy a certain quantum of knowledge, circumstances happened, in the commencement of the second year of his pupilage, which prodigiously accelerated the progress of his scholastic career.

¹ A celebrated Principal of Eton.

At the apartment of MacGrawler, Paul one morning encountered Mr. Augustus Tomlinson, a young man of great promise, who pursued the peaceful occupation of chronicling in a leading newspaper, "Horrid Murders," "Enormous Melons," and "Remarkable Circumstances." This gentleman, having the advantage of some years' seniority over Paul, was slow in unbending his dignity; but observing at last the eager and respectful attention with which the stripling listened to a most veracious detail of five men being inhumanly murdered in Canterbury Cathedral by the Reverend Zedekiah Fooks Barnacle, he was touched by the impression he had created, and, shaking Paul graciously by the hand, he told him there was a deal of natural shrewdness in his countenance; and that Mr. Augustus Tomlinson did not doubt but that he (Paul) might have the honor to be murdered himself one of these days. "You understand me!" continued Mr. Augustus,— "I mean murdered in effigy; assassinated in type, while you yourself, unconscious of the circumstance, are quietly enjoying what you imagine to be your existence. We never kill common persons: to say truth, our chief spite is against the church; we destroy bishops by wholesale. Sometimes, indeed, we knock off a leading barrister or so, and express the anguish of the junior counsel at a loss so destructive to their interests. But that is only a stray hit; and the slain barrister often lives to become attorney-general, renounce Whig principles, and prosecute the very press that destroyed him. Bishops are our *proper* food: we send them to heaven on a sort of flying griffin, of which the back is an apoplexy, and the wings are puffs. The Bishop of —, whom we despatched in this manner the other day, being rather a facetious personage, wrote to remonstrate with us thereon; observing that though

heaven was a very good translation for a bishop, yet that, in such cases, he preferred 'the original to the translation.' As we murder bishops, so is there another class of persons whom we only afflict with lethiferous diseases. This latter tribe consists of his Majesty and his Majesty's ministers. Whenever we cannot abuse their measures, we always fall foul on their health. Does the king pass any popular law,—we immediately insinuate that his constitution is on its last legs. Does the minister act like a man of sense,—we instantly observe, with great regret, that his complexion is remarkably pale. There is one manifest advantage in *diseasing* people, instead of absolutely destroying them. The public may flatly contradict us in one case, but it never can in the other: it is easy to prove that a man is alive, but utterly impossible to prove that he is in health. What if some opposing newspaper take up the cudgels in his behalf, and assert that the victim of all Pandora's complaints, whom we send tottering to the grave, passes one-half the day in knocking up a 'distinguished company' at a shooting-party, and the other half in outdoing the same 'distinguished company' after dinner? What if the afflicted individual himself write us word that he never was better in his life? — we have only mysteriously to shake our heads, and observe that to contradict is not to prove; that it is little likely that our authority should have been mistaken, and (we are very fond of an historical comparison) beg our readers to remember, that when Cardinal Richelieu was dying, nothing enraged him so much as hinting that he was ill. In short, if Horace is right, we are the very princes of poets; for, I daresay, Mr. MacGrawler, that you—and you, too, my little gentleman—perfectly remember the words of the wise old Roman,—

‘Ille per extantum funem mihi posse videtur
Ire poeta, meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet.’”¹

Having uttered this quotation with considerable self-complacency, and thereby entirely completed his conquest over Paul, Mr. Augustus Tomlinson, turning to MacGrawler, concluded his business with that gentleman, which was of a literary nature,—namely, a joint composition against a man who, being under five-and-twenty, and too poor to give dinners, had had the impudence to write a sacred poem. The critics were exceedingly bitter at this; and having very little to say against the poem, the Court journals called the author a “coxcomb,” and the Liberal ones “the son of a pantaloon!”

There was an ease, a spirit, a life about Mr. Augustus Tomlinson, which captivated the senses of our young hero; then, too, he was exceedingly smartly attired: wore red heels and a bag; had what seemed to Paul quite the air of a “man of fashion;” and above all, he spouted the Latin with a remarkable grace!

Some days afterwards MacGrawler sent our hero to Mr. Tomlinson’s lodgings, with his share of the joint abuse upon the poet.

Doubly was Paul’s reverence for Mr. Augustus Tomlinson increased by a sight of his abode. He found him settled in a polite part of the town, in a very spruce parlor, the contents of which manifested the universal genius of the inhabitant. It hath been objected unto us by a most discerning critic, that we are addicted to the drawing of “universal geniuses.” We plead not guilty in former instances; we allow the soft impeach-

¹ He appears to me to be, to the fullest extent, a poet, who airily torments my breast, irritates, soothes, fills it with unreal terrors.

ment in the instance of Mr. Augustus Tomlinson. Over his fireplace were arranged boxing-gloves and fencing-foils. On his table lay a cremona and a flageolet. On one side of the wall were shelves containing the "Covent Garden Magazine," Burns's "Justice," a pocket "Horace," a prayer-book, "Excerpta ex Tacito," a volume of Plays, "Philosophy made Easy," and a "Key to all Knowledge." Furthermore, there were on another table a riding-whip, and a driving-whip, and a pair of spurs, and three guineas, with a little mountain of loose silver. Mr. Augustus was a tall, fair young man, with a freckled complexion; green eyes and red eyelids; a smiling mouth, rather under-jawed; a sharp nose; and a prodigiously large pair of ears. He was robed in a green damask dressing-gown; and he received the tender Paul most graciously.

There was something very engaging about our hero. He was not only good-looking, and frank in aspect, but he had that appearance of briskness and intellect which belong to an embryo rogue. Mr. Augustus Tomlinson professed the greatest regard for him; asked him if he could box; made him put on a pair of gloves; and very condescendingly knocked him down three times successively. Next he played him, both upon his flageolet and his cremona, some of the most modish airs. Moreover, he sang him a little song of his own composing. He, then, taking up the driving-whip, flanked a fly from the opposite wall, and throwing himself (naturally fatigued with his numerous exertions) on his sofa, he observed in a careless tone, that he and his friend Lord Dunshunner were universally esteemed the best whips in the metropolis. "I," quoth Mr. Augustus, "am the best on the road; but my lord is a devil at turning a corner."

Paul, who had hitherto lived too unsophisticated a life to be aware of the importance of which a lord would naturally be in the eyes of Mr. Augustus Tomlinson, was not so much struck with the grandeur of the connection as the murderer of the journals had expected. He merely observed, by way of compliment, that Mr. Augustus and his companions seemed to be "rolling kiddies."

A little displeased with this metaphorical remark, — for it may be observed that "rolling kiddy" is, among the learned in such lore, the customary expression for "a smart thief," — the universal Augustus took that liberty to which, by his age and station, so much superior to those of Paul, he imagined himself entitled, and gently reproved our hero for his indiscriminate use of flash phrases.

"A lad of your parts," said he, — "for I see you are clever by your eye, — ought to be ashamed of using such vulgar expressions. Have a nobler spirit, — a loftier emulation, Paul, than that which distinguishes the little ragamuffins of the street. Know that, in this country, genius and learning carry everything before them; and if you behave yourself properly, you may, one day or another, be as high in the world as myself."

At this speech Paul looked wistfully round the spruce parlor, and thought what a fine thing it would be to be lord of such a domain, together with the appliances of flageolet and cremona, boxing-gloves, books, fly-flanking flagellum, three guineas, with the little mountain of silver, and the reputation — shared only with Lord Dunshunner — of being the best whip in London.

"Yes!" continued Tomlinson, with conscious pride, "I owe my rise to myself. Learning is better than house and land. '*Doctrina sed vim,*' etc. You know

what old Horace says? Why, sir, you would not believe it; but I was the man who killed his Majesty the King of Sardinia, in our yesterday's paper. Nothing is too arduous for genius. Fag hard, my boy, and you may rival — for the thing, though difficult, may not be impossible — Augustus Tomlinson! ”

At the conclusion of this harangue, a knock at the door being heard, Paul took his departure, and met in the hall a fine looking person dressed in the height of the fashion and wearing a pair of prodigiously large buckles in his shoes. Paul looked, and his heart swelled. “I may rival,” thought he, — those were his very words, — “I may rival — for the thing, though difficult, is not impossible — Augustus Tomlinson! ” Absorbed in meditation, he went silently home. The next day the memoirs of the great Turpin were committed to the flames, and it was noticeable that henceforth Paul observed a choicer propriety of words; that he assumed a more refined air of dignity; and that he paid considerably more attention than heretofore to the lessons of Mr. Peter MacGrawler. Although it must be allowed that our young hero's progress in the learned languages was not astonishing, yet an early passion for reading, growing stronger and stronger by application, repaid him at last with a tolerable knowledge of the mother tongue. We must, however, add that his more favorite and cherished studies were scarcely of that nature which a prudent preceptor would have greatly commended. They lay chiefly among novels, plays, and poetry, which last he affected to that degree that he became somewhat of a poet himself. Nevertheless, these literary avocations, profitless as they seemed, gave a certain refinement to his tastes, which they were not likely otherwise to have acquired at the “Mug;” and while they aroused his ambition to see something of

the gay life they depicted, they imparted to his temper a tone of enterprise and thoughtless generosity which perhaps contributed greatly to counteract those evil influences towards petty vice to which the examples around him must have exposed his tender youth. But, alas! a great disappointment to Paul's hope of assistance and companionship in his literary labors befell him. Mr. Augustus Tomlinson, one bright morning, disappeared, leaving word with his numerous friends that he was going to accept a lucrative situation in the north of England. Notwithstanding the shock this occasioned to the affectionate heart and aspiring temper of our friend Paul, it abated not his ardor in that field of science which it seemed that the distinguished absentee had so successfully cultivated. By little and little, he possessed himself (in addition to the literary stores we have alluded to) of all it was in the power of the wise and profound Peter MacGrawler to impart unto him; and at the age of sixteen he began (oh, the presumption of youth!) to fancy himself more learned than his master.

CHAPTER IV.

He had now become a young man of extreme fashion, and as much *répandu* in society as the utmost and most exigent coveter of London celebrity could desire. He was, of course, a member of the clubs, etc., etc., etc. He was, in short, of that oft-described set, before whom all minor beaux sink into insignificance, or among whom they eventually obtain a subaltern *grade*, by a sacrifice of a due portion of their fortune. — *Almack's Revisited*.

By the soul of the great Malebranche, who made "A Search after Truth," and discovered everything beautiful except that which he searched for, — by the soul of the great Malebranche, whom Bishop Berkeley found suffering under an inflammation in the lungs, and very obligingly *talked to death* (an instance of conversational powers worthy the envious emulation of all great metaphysicians and arguers), — by the soul of that illustrious man, it is amazing to us what a number of truths there are broken up into little fragments, and scattered here and there through the world. What a magnificent museum a man might make of the precious minerals, if he would but go out with his basket under his arm, and his eyes about him! We ourselves picked up this very day a certain small piece of truth, with which we propose to explain to thee, fair reader, a sinister turn in the fortunes of Paul.

"Wherever," says a living sage, "you see dignity, you may be sure there is expense requisite to support it."¹ So was it with Paul. A young gentleman who was heir-presumptive to the "Mug," and who enjoyed a

¹ "Popular Fallacies."

handsome person with a cultivated mind, was necessarily of a certain station of society, and an object of respect in the eyes of the manœuvring mammas of the vicinity of Thames Court. Many were the parties of pleasure to Deptford and Greenwich which Paul found himself compelled to attend; and we need not refer our readers to novels upon fashionable life, to inform them that, in good society, the *gentlemen always pay for the ladies!* Nor was this all the expense to which his expectations exposed him. A gentleman could scarcely attend these elegant festivities without devoting some little attention to his dress; and a fashionable tailor plays the deuce with one's yearly allowance!

We, who reside, be it known to you, reader, in Little Brittany, are not very well acquainted with the manners of the better classes in St. James's. But there was one great vice among the fine people about Thames Court, which we make no doubt does not exist anywhere else, — namely, these fine people were always in an agony to seem finer than they were; and the more airs a gentleman or a lady gave him or her self, the more important they became. Joe, the dogs'-meat man, had indeed got into society entirely from a knack of saying impertinent things to everybody; and the smartest exclusives of the place, who seldom visited any one where there was not a silver teapot, used to think Joe had a great deal in him because he trundled his cart with his head in the air, and one day gave the very beadle of the parish "the cut direct."

Now this desire to be so exceedingly fine, not only made the society about Thames Court unpleasant, but expensive. Every one vied with his neighbor; and as the spirit of rivalry is particularly strong in youthful bosoms, we can scarcely wonder that it led Paul into

many extravagances. The evil of all circles that profess to be select, is high play, and the reason is obvious: persons who have the power to bestow on another an advantage he covets, would rather sell it than give it: and Paul, gradually increasing in popularity and *ton*, found himself, in spite of his classical education, no match for the finished, or rather finishing gentlemen, with whom he began to associate. His first admittance into the select coterie of these men of the world, was formed at the house of Bachelor Bill, a person of great notoriety among that portion of the *élite* which emphatically entitles itself "flash." However, as it is our rigid intention in this work to portray at length no episodical characters whatsoever, we can afford our readers but a slight and rapid sketch of Bachelor Bill.

This personage was of Devonshire extraction. His mother had kept the pleasantest public-house in town; and at her death Bill succeeded to her property and popularity. All the young ladies in the neighborhood of Fiddler's Row, where he resided, set their caps at him; all the most fashionable "prigs," or "tobymen," sought to get him into their set; and the most crack "blowen" in London would have given her ears at any time for a loving word from Bachelor Bill. But Bill was a long-headed, prudent fellow, and of a remarkably cautious temperament. He avoided marriage and friendship, — namely, he was neither plundered nor cornuted. He was a tall, aristocratic "cove," of a devilish neat address, and very gallant, in an honest way, to the "blowens." Like most single men, being very much the gentleman so far as money was concerned, he gave them plenty of "feeds," and from time to time a very agreeable "hop." His "bingo"¹ was unexceptionable; and as for his

¹ Brandy.

"stark-naked,"¹ it was voted the most brilliant thing in nature. In a very short time, by his blows-out and his bachelorship, — for single men always arrive at the apex of *haut ton* more easily than married, — he became the very glass of fashion; and many were the tight apprentices, even at the west end of the town, who used to turn back in admiration of Bachelor Bill, when, of a Sunday afternoon, he drove down his varment gig to his snug little box on the borders of Turnham Green. Bill's happiness was not, however, wholly without alloy. The ladies of pleasure are always so excessively angry when a man does not make love to them, that there is nothing they will not say against him; and the fair matrons in the vicinity of Fiddler's Row spread all manner of unfounded reports against poor Bachelor Bill. By degrees, however, — for, as Tacitus has said, doubtless with a prophetic eye to Bachelor Bill, "the truth gains by delay," — these reports began to die insensibly away; and Bill, now waxing near to the confines of middle age, his friends comfortably settled for him that he would be Bachelor Bill all his life. For the rest, he was an excellent fellow, — gave his broken victuals to the poor; professed a liberal turn of thinking; and in all the quarrels among the "blowens" (your crack "blowens" are a quarrelsome set!) always took part with the weakest. Although Bill affected to be very select in his company, he was never forgetful of his old friends; and Mrs. Margery Lobkins, having been very good to him when he was a little boy in a skeleton jacket, he invariably sent her a card to his *soirées*. The good lady, however, had not of late years deserted her chimney-corner. Indeed, the racket of fashionable life was too much for her nerves, and the invitation had become a customary

¹ Gin.

form not expected to be acted upon, but not a whit the less regularly used for that reason. As Paul had now attained his sixteenth year, and was a fine, handsome lad, the dame thought he would make an excellent representative of the "Mug's " mistress; and that for her *protégé* a ball at Bill's house would be no bad commencement of "life in London." Accordingly, she intimated to the Bachelor a wish to that effect, and Paul received the following invitation from Bill: —

"Mr. William Duke gives a hop and feed in a quiet way on Monday next, and *hops* Mr. Paul Lobkins will be of the party. — N. B. Gentlemen *is* expected to come in pumps."

When Paul entered, he found Bachelor Bill leading off the ball to the tune of "Drops of Brandy," with a young lady to whom — because she had been a strolling player — the Ladies Patronesses of Fiddler's Row had thought proper to behave with a very cavalier civility. The good bachelor had no notion, as he expressed it, of such tantrums, and he caused it to be circulated among the finest of the "blowens," that "he expected all who kicked their heels at his house would behave decent and polite to young Mrs. Dot." This intimation, conveyed to the ladies with all that insinuating polish for which Bachelor Bill was so remarkable, produced a notable effect; and Mrs. Dot, being now led off by the flash bachelor, was overpowered with civilities the rest of the evening.

When the dance was ended, Bill very politely shook hands with Paul, and took an early opportunity of introducing him to some of the most "noted characters" of the town. Among these was the smart Mr. Allfair, the insinuating Henry Finish, the merry Jack Hookey, the knowing Charles Trywit, and various others equally

noted for their skill in living handsomely upon their own brains and the personals of other people. To say truth, Paul, who at that time was an honest lad, was less charmed than he had anticipated by the conversation of these chevaliers of industry. He was more pleased with the clever, though self-sufficient remarks of a gentleman with a remarkably fine head of hair, and whom we would, more impressively than the rest, introduce to our reader under the appellation of Mr. Edward Pepper, generally termed Long Ned. As this worthy was destined afterwards to be an intimate associate of Paul, our main reason for attending the hop at Bachelor Bill's is to note, as the importance of the event deserves, the epoch of the commencement of their acquaintance.

Long Ned and Paul happened to sit next to each other at supper, and they conversed together so amicably that Paul, in the hospitality of his heart, expressed a hope that "he should see Mr. Pepper at the 'Mug'!"

"Mug, — Mug!" repeated Pepper, half shutting his eyes, with the air of a dandy about to be impertinent: "Ah, — the name of a chapel, is it not? There's a sect called the Muggletonians, I think?"

"As to that," said Paul, coloring at this insinuation against the "Mug," "Mrs. Lobkins has no more religion than her betters; but the 'Mug' is a very excellent house, and frequented by the best possible company."

"Don't doubt it!" said Ned. "Remember now that I was once there, and saw one Dummie Dunnaker, — is not that the name? I recollect some years ago, when I first came out, that Dummie and I had an adventure together, — to tell you the truth, it was not the sort of thing I would do now. But would you believe it, Mr. Paul, this pitiful fellow was quite rude to me the only time I ever met him since, — that is to say, the only

time I ever entered the 'Mug.' I have no notion of such airs in a merchant, — a merchant of rags! Those commercial fellows are getting quite insufferable!"

"You surprise me!" said Paul; "poor Dummie is the last man to be rude. He is as civil a creature as ever lived."

"Or sold a rag!" said Ned. "Possibly! Don't doubt his amiable qualities in the least. Pass the bingo, my good fellow. Stupid stuff, this dancing!"

"Devilish stupid!" echoed Harry Finish, across the table; "suppose we adjourn to Fish Lane, and rattle the ivories! What say you, Mr. Lobkins?"

Afraid of the "ton's stern laugh, which scarce the proud philosopher can scorn," and not being very partial to dancing, Paul assented to the proposition; and a little party, consisting of Harry Finish, Allfair, Long Ned, and Mr. Hookey, adjourned to Fish Lane, where there was a club, celebrated among men who live by their wits, at which "lush" and "baccy" were gratuitously sported in the most magnificent manner. Here the evening passed away very delightfully, and Paul went home without a "brad" in his pocket.

From that time, Paul's visits to Fish Lane became unfortunately regular; and in a very short period, we grieve to say, Paul became that distinguished character, — a gentleman of three outs: "out of pocket, out of elbows, and out of credit." The only two persons whom he found willing to *accommodate him with a slight loan*, as the advertisements signed X. Y. have it, were Mr. Dummie Dunnaker, and Mr. Pepper, surnamed the Long. The latter, however, while he obliged the heir to the "Mug," never condescended to enter that noted place of resort; and the former, whenever he good-naturedly opened his purse-strings, did it with a hearty

caution to shun the acquaintance of Long Ned. "A parson," said Dummie, "of wery dangerous morals, and not by no manner of means a fit sociate for a young gemman of cracter like leetle Paul!" So earnest was this caution, and so especially pointed at Long Ned, — although the company of Mr. Allfair or Mr. Finish might be said to be no less prejudicial, — that it is probable that stately fastidiousness of manner, which Lord Normanby rightly observes, in one of his excellent novels, makes so many enemies in the world, and which sometimes characterized the behavior of Long Ned, especially towards the men of commerce, was a main reason why Dummie was so acutely and peculiarly alive to the immoralities of that lengthy gentleman. At the same time we must observe, that when Paul, remembering what Pepper had said respecting his early adventure with Mr. Dunnaker, repeated it to the merchant, Dummie could not conceal a certain confusion, though he merely remarked, with a sort of laugh, that it was not worth speaking about; and it appeared evident to Paul, that something unpleasant to the man of rags, which was not shared by the unconscious Pepper, lurked in the reminiscence of their past acquaintance. Howbeit, the circumstance glided from Paul's attention the moment afterwards; and he paid, we are concerned to say, equally little heed to the cautions against Ned with which Dummie regaled him.

Perhaps (for we must now direct a glance towards his domestic concerns) one great cause which drove Paul to Fish Lane, was the uncomfortable life he led at home. For though Mrs. Lobkins was extremely fond of her *protégé*, yet she was possessed, as her customers emphatically remarked, "of the devil's own temper;" and her native coarseness never having been softened by

those pictures of gay society which had, in many a novel and comic farce, refined the temperament of the romantic Paul, her manner of venting her maternal reproaches was certainly not a little revolting to a lad of some delicacy of feeling. Indeed, it often occurred to him to leave her house altogether, and seek his fortunes alone, after the manner of the ingenious Gil Blas, or the enterprising Roderick Random; and this idea, though conquered and reconquered, gradually swelled and increased at his heart, even as swelleth that hairy ball found in the stomach of some suffering heifer after its decease. Among these projects of enterprise, the reader will hereafter notice that an early vision of the Green Forest Cave, in which Turpin was accustomed, with a friend, a ham, and a wife, to conceal himself, flitted across his mind. At this time he did not, perhaps, incline to the mode of life practised by the hero of the roads; but he certainly clung not the less fondly to the notion of the cave.

The melancholy flow of our hero's life was now, however, about to be diverted by an unexpected turn, and the crude thoughts of boyhood to burst, "like Ghilan's Giant Palm," into the fruit of a manly resolution.

Among the prominent features of Mrs. Lobkins's mind was a sovereign contempt for the unsuccessful; — the imprudence and ill-luck of Paul occasioned her as much scorn as compassion. And when, for the third time within a week, he stood, with a rueful visage and with vacant pockets, by the dame's great chair, requesting an additional supply, the tides of her wrath swelled into overflow.

"Look you, my kinchin cove," said she, — and, in order to give peculiar dignity to her aspect, she put on while she spoke a huge pair of tin spectacles, — "if so

be as how you goes for to think as how I shall go for to supply your wicious necessities, you will find yourself planted in Queer Street. Blow me tight if I gives you another mag."

"But I owe Long Ned a guinea," said Paul; "and Dummie Dunnaker lent me three crowns. It ill becomes your heir-apparent, my dear dame, to fight shy of his debts of honor."

"Taradiddle, don't think for to wheedle me with your debts and your honor," said the dame, in a passion. "Long Ned is as long in the forks [fingers] as he is in the back: may Old Harry fly off with him! And as for Dummie Dunnaker, I wonders how you, brought up such a swell, and blessed with the very best of hedICATIONS, can think of putting up with such vulgar sociates! I tells you what, Paul, you 'll please to break with them, smack and at once, or devil a brad you 'll ever get from Peg Lobkins." So saying, the old lady turned round in her chair, and helped herself to a pipe of tobacco.

Paul walked twice up and down the apartment, and at last stopped opposite the dame's chair. He was a youth of high spirit, and though he was warm-hearted, and had a love for Mrs. Lobkins, which her care and affection for him well deserved, yet he was rough in temper, and not constantly smooth in speech. It is true that his heart smote him afterwards, whenever he had said anything to annoy Mrs. Lobkins, and he was always the first to seek a reconciliation; but warm words produced cold respect, and sorrow for the past is not always efficacious in amending the future. Paul then, puffed up with the vanity of his genteel education, and the friendship of Long Ned (who went to Ranelagh, and wore silver-clocked stockings), stopped opposite to Mrs. Lobkins's chair, and said, with great solemnity, —

"Mr. Pepper, madam, says very properly that I must have money to support myself like a gentleman; and if you won't give it me, I am determined, with many thanks for your past favors, to throw myself on the world, and seek my fortune."

If Paul was of no oily and bland temper, Dame Margaret Lobkins, it has been seen, had no advantage on that score. We daresay the reader has observed that nothing so enrages persons on whom one depends, as any expressed determination of seeking independence. Gazing, therefore, for one moment at the open but resolute countenance of Paul, while all the blood of her veins seemed gathering in fire and scarlet to her enlarging cheeks, Dame Lobkins said, —

"Ifeaks, Master Pride-in-duds! seek your fortune yourself, will you? This comes of my bringing you up, and letting you eat the bread of idleness and charity, you toad of a thousand! Take that and be d—d to you!" and, suiting the action to the word, the tube, which she had withdrawn from her mouth in order to utter her gentle rebuke, whizzed through the air, grazed Paul's cheek, and finished its earthly career by coming in violent contact with the right eye of Dum-mie Dunnaker, who at that exact moment entered the room.

Paul had winced for a moment to avoid the missive, — in the next he stood perfectly upright. His cheeks glowed, — his chest swelled; and the entrance of Dum-mie Dunnaker, who was thus made the spectator of the affront he had received, stirred his blood into a deeper anger and a more bitter self-humiliation. All his former resolutions of departure; all the hard words, the coarse allusions, the practical insults he had at any time received, — rushed upon him at once. He merely cast

one look at the old woman, whose rage was now half subsided, and turned slowly and in silence to the door.

There is often something alarming in an occurrence, merely because it is that which we least expect. The astute Mrs. Lobkins, remembering the hardy temper and fiery passions of Paul, had expected some burst of rage, some vehement reply; and when she caught with one wandering eye his parting look, and saw him turn so passively and mutely to the door, her heart misgave her; she raised herself from her chair, and made towards him. Unhappily for her chance of reconciliation, she had that day quaffed more copiously of the bowl than usual, and the signs of intoxication visible in her uncertain gait, her meaningless eye, her vacant leer, her ruby cheek, — all inspired Paul with feelings which, at the moment, converted resentment into something very much like aversion. He sprang from her grasp to the threshold. "Where be you going, you imp of the world?" cried the dame. "Get in with you, and say no more on the matter; be a bob-cull, — drop the bullies, and you shall have the blunt."

But Paul heeded not this invitation.

"I will eat the bread of idleness and charity no longer," said he, sullenly. "Good-by, — and if ever I can pay you what I have cost you, I will!"

He turned away as he spoke; and the dame, kindling with resentment at his unseemly return to her proffered kindness, hallooed after him, and bade that dark-colored gentleman who keeps the *fire-office* below, go along with him.

Swelling with anger, pride, shame, and a half-joyous feeling of emancipated independence, Paul walked on he knew not whither, with his head in the air, and his legs marshalling themselves into a military gait of de-

fiance. He had not proceeded far before he heard his name uttered behind him,—he turned, and saw the rueful face of Dummie Dunnaker.

Very inoffensively had that respectable person been employed during the last part of the scene we have described, in caressing his afflicted eye, and muttering philosophical observations on the danger incurred by all those who are acquainted with ladies of a choleric temperament; when Mrs. Lobkins, turning round after Paul's departure, and seeing the pitiful person of that Dummie Dunnaker whose name she remembered Paul had mentioned in his opening speech, and whom, therefore, with an illogical confusion of ideas, she considered a party in the late dispute, exhausted upon him all that rage which it was necessary for her comfort that she should unburden somewhere.

She seized the little man by the collar,—the tenderest of all places in gentlemen similarly circumstanced with regard to the ways of life,—and giving him a blow, which took effect on his other and hitherto undamaged eye, cried out, "I'll teach you, you blood-sucker [that is, parasite] to sponge upon those as has expectations! I'll teach you to cozen the heir of the 'Mug,' you snivelling, whey-faced ghost of a farthing rushlight! What! you'll lend my Paul three crowns, will you, when you knows as how you told me you could not pay me a pitiful tizzy? Oh, you're a queer one, I warrants; but you won't queer Margery Lobkins. Out of my ken, you cur of the mange!—out of my ken; and if ever I claps my sees on you again, or if ever I knows as how you makes a flat of my Paul, blow me tight but I'll weave you a hempen collar; I'll hang you, you dog, I will. What! you will answer me, will you? Oh, you viper, budge, and begone!"

It was in vain that Dummie protested his innocence. A violent *coup de pied* broke off all further parlane. He made a clear house of the "Mug;" and the landlady thereof, tottering back to her elbow-chair, sought out another pipe, and, like all imaginative persons when the world goes wrong with them, consoled herself for the absence of realities by the creations of smoke.

Meanwhile, Dummie Dunnaker, muttering bitter fancies, overtook Paul, and accused that youth of having been the occasion of the injuries he had just undergone. Paul was not at that moment in the humor best adapted for the patient bearing of accusations; he answered Mr. Dunnaker very shortly; and that respectable individual, still smarting under his bruises, replied with equal tartness. Words grew high, and at length Paul, desirous of concluding the conference, clenched his fist, and told the redoubted Dummie that he would "knock him down." There is something peculiarly harsh and stunning in those three hard, wiry, sturdy, stubborn monosyllables. Their very sound makes you double your fist, — if you are a hero; or your pace, — if you are a peaceable man. They produced an instant effect upon Dummie Dunnaker, aided as they were by the effect of an athletic and youthful figure, already fast approaching to the height of six feet, a flushed cheek, and an eye that bespoke both passion and resolution. The rag-merchant's voice sank at once, and with the countenance of a wronged Cassius he whimpered forth, —

"Knock me down! Oh, leetle Paul, vot vicked vhidz are those! Vot! Dummie Dunnaker as has dandled you on his knee mony's a time and oft! Vy, the cove's art is as ard as junk, and as proud as a gardener's dog vith a nosegay tied to his tail." This pathetic remonstrance softened Paul's anger.

"Well, Dummie," said he, laughing, "I did not mean to hurt you, and there's an end of it; and I am very sorry for the dame's ill-conduct; and so I wish you a good-morning."

"Vy, vere be you trotting to, leetle Paul?" said Dummie, grasping him by the tail of the coat.

"The deuce a bit I know," answered our hero; "but I think I shall drop a call on Long Ned."

"Avast there!" said Dummie, speaking under his breath; "if so be as you von't blab, I'll tell you a bit of a secret. I heered as ow Long Ned started for Hampshire this werry morning on a toby consarn!"¹

"Ha!" said Paul, "then hang me if I know what to do!" As he uttered these words, a more thorough sense of his destitution (if he persevered in leaving the "Mug") than he had hitherto felt rushed upon him; for Paul had designed for a while to throw himself on the hospitality of his Patagonian friend, and now that he found that friend was absent from London, and on so dangerous an expedition, he was a little puzzled what to do with that treasure of intellect and wisdom which he carried about upon his legs. Already he had acquired sufficient penetration (for Charles Trywit and Harry Finish were excellent masters for initiating a man into the knowledge of the world) to perceive that a person, however admirable may be his qualities, does not readily find a welcome without a penny in his pocket. In the neighborhood of Thames Court he had, indeed, many acquaintances; but the fineness of his language, acquired from his education, and the elegance of his air, in which he attempted to blend, in happy association, the gallant effrontery of Mr. Long Ned with the graceful negligence of Mr. Augustus Tomlinson had made him many ene-

¹ Highway expedition.

mies among those acquaintances; and he was not willing — so great was our hero's pride — to throw himself on the chance of their welcome, or to publish, as it were, his exiled and crestfallen state. As for those boon companions who had assisted him in making a wilderness of his pockets, he had already found that that was the only species of assistance which they were willing to render him: in a word, he could not, for the life of him, conjecture in what quarter he should find the benefits of bed and board. While he stood with his finger to his lip, undecided and musing, but fully resolved at least on one thing, — not to return to the "Mug," little Dummie, who was a good-natured fellow at the bottom, peered up in his face, and said, "Vy, Paul, my kid, you looks down in the chops; cheer up; care killed a cat!"

Observing that this appropriate and encouraging fact of natural history did not lessen the cloud upon Paul's brow, the acute Dummie Dunnaker proceeded at once to the grand panacea for all evils, in his own profound estimation.

"Paul, my ben cull," said he, with a knowing wink, and nudging the young gentleman in the left side, "vot do you say to a drop o' blue ruin? — or, as you likes to be conish [genteel], I does n't care if I sports you a glass of port!" While Dunnaker was uttering this invitation, a sudden reminiscence flashed across Paul: he bethought him at once of MacGrawler; and he resolved forthwith to repair to the abode of that illustrious sage, and petition at least for accommodation for the approaching night. So soon as he had come to this determination, he shook off the grasp of the amiable Dummie, and refusing, with many thanks, his hospitable invitation, requested him to abstract from the dame's house, and

lodge within his own, until called for, such articles of linen and clothing as belonged to Paul, and could easily be laid hold of, during one of the matron's evening *siestas*, by the shrewd Dunnaker. The merchant promised that the commission should be speedily executed; and Paul, shaking hands with him, proceeded to the mansion of MacGrawler.

We must now go back somewhat in the natural course of our narrative, and observe that among the minor causes which had conspired, with the great one of gambling, to bring our excellent Paul to his present situation, was his intimacy with MacGrawler; for when Paul's increasing years and roving habits had put an end to the sage's instructions, there was thereby lopped off from the preceptor's finances the weekly sum of two shillings and sixpence, as well as the freedom of the dame's cellar and larder; and as, in the reaction of feeling, and the perverse course of human affairs, people generally repent the most of those actions once the most ardently incurred, so poor Mrs. Lobkins, imagining that Paul's irregularities were entirely owing to the knowledge he had acquired from MacGrawler's instructions, grievously upbraided herself for her former folly in seeking for a superior education for her *protégé*: nay, she even vented upon the sacred head of MacGrawler himself her dissatisfaction at the results of his instructions. In like manner, when a man who can spell comes to be hanged, the anti-educationists accuse the spelling-book of his murder. High words between the admirer of ignorant innocence, and the propagator of intellectual science, ensued, which ended in MacGrawler's final expulsion from the "Mug."

There are some young gentlemen of the present day addicted to the adoption of Lord Byron's poetry, with

the alteration of new rhymes, who are pleased graciously to inform us that they are born to be the ruin of all those who love them: an interesting fact, doubtless, but which they might as well keep to themselves. It would seem, by the contents of this chapter, as if the same misfortune were destined to Paul. The exile of MacGrawler, the insults offered to Dummie Dunnaker, alike occasioned by him, appear to sanction that opinion. Unfortunately, though Paul was a poet, he was not much of a sentimentalist; and he has never given us the edifying ravings of his remorse on those subjects. But MacGrawler, like Dunnaker, was resolved that our hero should perceive the curse of his fatality: and as he still retained some influence over the mind of his quondam pupil, his accusations against Paul, as the origin of his banishment, were attended with a greater success than were the complaints of Dummie Dunnaker on a similar calamity. Paul, who, like most people who are good for nothing, had an excellent heart, was exceedingly grieved at MacGrawler's banishment on his account; and he endeavored to atone for it by such pecuniary consolations as he was enabled to offer. These MacGrawler (purely, we may suppose, from a benevolent desire to lessen the boy's remorse) scrupled not to accept; and, thus, so similar often are the effects of virtue and of vice, the exemplary MacGrawler conspired with the unprincipled Long Ned and the heartless Henry Finish in producing that unenviable state of vacuity which now saddened over the pockets of Paul.

As our hero was slowly walking towards the sage's abode, depending on his gratitude and friendship for a temporary shelter, one of those lightning flashes of thought which often illumine the profoundest abyss of affliction darted across his mind. Recalling the image

of the critic, he remembered that he had seen that ornament of the "Asinæum" receive sundry sums for his critical lucubrations.

"Why," said Paul, seizing on that fact, and stopping short in the street, — "why should I not turn critic myself?"

The only person to whom one ever puts a question with a tolerable certainty of receiving a satisfactory answer is one's self. The moment Paul started this luminous suggestion, it appeared to him that he had discovered the mines of Potosi. Burning with impatience to discuss with the great MacGrawler the feasibility of his project, he quickened his pace almost into a run; and in a very few minutes, having only overthrown one chimney-sweeper and two applewomen by the way, he arrived at the sage's door.

CHAPTER V.

Ye realms yet unrevealed to human sight !
Ye canes athwart the hapless hands that write !
Ye critic chiefs, — permit me to relate
The mystic wonders of your silent state !

VIRGIL: *Æn.* b. vi.

FORTUNE had smiled upon Mr. MacGrawler since he first undertook the tuition of Mrs. Lobkins's *protégé*. He now inhabited a second floor, and defied the sheriff and his evil spirits. It was at the dusk of evening that Paul found him at home and alone.

Before the mighty man stood a pot of London porter; a candle, with an unregarded wick, shed its solitary light upon his labors; and an infant cat played sportively at his learned feet, beguiling the weary moments with the remnants of the spiral cap wherewith, instead of laurel, the critic had hitherto nightly adorned his brows.

So soon as MacGrawler, piercing through the gloomy mist which hung about the chamber, perceived the person of the intruder, a frown settled upon his brow.

"Have I not told you, youngster!" he growled, "never to enter a gentleman's room without knocking? I tell you, sir, that manners are no less essential to human happiness than virtue; wherefore, never disturb a gentleman in his avocations and sit yourself down without molesting the cat!"

Paul, who knew that his respected tutor disliked any one to trace the source of the wonderful spirit which

he infused into his critical compositions, affected not to perceive the pewter Hippocrene; and with many apologies for his want of preparatory politeness, seated himself as directed. It was then that the following edifying conversation ensued.

"The ancients," quoth Paul, "were very great men, Mr. MacGrawler."

"They were so, sir," returned the critic; "we make it a rule in our profession to assert that fact."

"But, sir," said Paul, "they were wrong now and then."

"Never, ignoramus; never!"

"They praised poverty, Mr. MacGrawler," said Paul, with a sigh.

"Hem," quoth the critic, a little staggered; but presently recovering his characteristic acumen, he observed, "It is true, Paul; but that was the poverty of other people."

There was a slight pause.

"Criticism," renewed Paul, "must be a most difficult art."

"A-hem! And what art is there, sir, that is not difficult, — at least to become master of?"

"True," sighed Paul; "or else —"

"Or else what, boy?" repeated Mr. MacGrawler, seeing that Paul hesitated, either from fear of his superior knowledge, as the critic's vanity suggested, or from (what was equally likely) want of a word to express his meaning.

"Why, I was thinking, sir," said Paul, with that desperate courage which gives a distinct and loud intonation to the voice of all who set, or think they set their fate upon a cast, — "I was thinking that I should like to become a critic myself."

"W-h-e-w!" whistled MacGrawler, elevating his eyebrows, — "w-h-e-w! great ends have come of less beginnings!"

Encouraging as this assertion was, coming as it did from the lips of so great a man and so great a critic, at the very moment, too, when nothing short of an anathema against arrogance and presumption was expected to issue from those portals of wisdom; yet such is the fallacy of all human hopes, that Paul's of a surety would have been a little less elated had he, at the same time his ears drank in the balm of these gracious words, been able to have dived into the source whence they emanated.

"Know thyself!" was a precept the sage MacGrawler had endeavored to obey: consequently the result of his obedience was, that even by himself he was better known than trusted. Whatever he might appear to others, he had in reality no vain faith in the infallibility of his own talents and resources. As well might a butcher deem himself a perfect anatomist from the frequent amputation of legs of mutton, as the critic of the "Asinaeum" have laid "the flattering unction to his soul," that he was really skilled in the art of criticism, or even acquainted with one of its commonest rules, because he could with all speed cut up and disjoint any work, from the smallest to the greatest, from the most superficial to the most superior; and thus it was that he never had the want of candor to deceive *himself* as to his own talents. Paul's wish, therefore, was no sooner expressed, than a vague but golden scheme of future profit illumed the brain of MacGrawler,—in a word, he resolved that Paul should henceforward share the labor of his critiques; and that he, MacGrawler, should receive the whole profits in return for the honor thereby conferred on his coadjutor.

Looking, therefore, at our hero with a benignant air, Mr. MacGrawler thus continued: —

“Yes, I repeat, great ends have come from less beginnings! Rome was not built in a day, — and I, Paul, I myself was not always the editor of the ‘*Asinæum*.’ You say wisely, criticism is a great science, — a very great science; and it may be divided into three branches, — namely, ‘to tickle, to slash, and to plaster.’ In each of these three, I believe, without vanity, I am a profound adept. I will initiate you into all. Your labors shall begin this very evening. I have three works on my table, — they must be despatched by to-morrow night; I will take the most arduous, I abandon to you the others. The three consist of a Romance, an Epic in twelve books, and an Inquiry into the human mind, in three volumes; I, Paul, will tickle the Romance, you this very evening shall plaster the Epic and slash the Inquiry!”

“Heavens, Mr. MacGrawler!” cried Paul, in consternation; “what do you mean? I should never be able to read an Epic in twelve books, and I should fall asleep in the first page of the Inquiry. No, no; leave me the Romance, and take the other two under your own protection!”

Although great genius is always benevolent, Mr. MacGrawler could not restrain a smile of ineffable contempt at the simplicity of his pupil.

“Know, young gentleman,” said he, solemnly, “that the Romance in question must be tickled; it is not given to raw beginners to conquer that great mystery of our science.”

“Before we proceed farther, explain the words of the art,” said Paul, impatiently.

“Listen, then,” rejoined MacGrawler; and, as he

spoke, the candle cast an awful glimmering on his countenance. "To slash is, speaking grammatically, to employ the accusative, or accusing case; you must cut up your book right and left, top and bottom, root and branch. To plaster a book is to employ the dative, or giving case, and you must bestow on the work all the superlatives in the language; you must lay on your praise thick and thin, and not leave a crevice untrowelled. But to tickle, sir, is a comprehensive word, and it comprises all the infinite varieties that fill the interval between slashing and plastering. This is the nicety of the art, and you can only acquire it by practice; a few examples will suffice to give you an idea of its delicacy.

"We will begin with the encouraging tickle. 'Although this work is full of faults: though the characters are unnatural, the plot utterly improbable, the thoughts hackneyed, and the style ungrammatical, yet we would by no means discourage the author from proceeding; and in the meanwhile we confidently recommend his work to the attention of the reading public.'

"Take, now, the advising tickle.

"'There is a good deal of merit in these little volumes, although we must regret the evident haste in which they were written. The author might do better; we recommend him a study of the best writers,' — then conclude by a Latin quotation, which you may take from one of the mottoes in the 'Spectator.'

"Now, young gentleman, for a specimen of the metaphorical tickle.

"'We beg this poetical aspirant to remember the fate of Pyrenæus, who, attempting to pursue the Muses, forgot that he had not the wings of the goddesses, flung himself from the loftiest ascent he could reach, and perished.'

"This, you see, Paul, is a loftier and more erudite sort of tickle, and may be reserved for one of the 'Quarterly Reviews.' Never throw away a simile unnecessarily.

"Now for a sample of the facetious tickle.

"'Mr. — has obtained a considerable reputation! Some fine ladies think him a great philosopher, and he has been praised in our hearing by some Cambridge Fellows, for his knowledge of fashionable society.'

"For this sort of tickle we generally use the dullest of our tribe, and I have selected the foregoing example from the criticisms of a distinguished writer in the 'Asinæum,' whom we call, *par excellence*, the Ass.

"There is a variety of other tickles: the familiar, the vulgar, the polite, the good-natured, the bitter; but in general all tickles may be supposed to signify, however disguised, one or other of these meanings: 'This book would be exceedingly good if it were not exceedingly bad;' or, 'This book would be exceedingly bad if it were not exceedingly good.'

"You have now, Paul, a general idea of the superior art required by the tickle?"

Our hero signified his assent by a sort of hysterical sound between a laugh and a groan. MacGrawler continued: —

"There is another grand difficulty attendant on this class of criticism, — it is generally requisite to read a few pages of the work; because we seldom tickle without extracting, and it requires some judgment to make the context agree with the extract; but it is not often necessary to extract when you slash, or when you plaster; when you slash, it is better in general to conclude with, —

"'After what we have said, it is unnecessary to add, that we cannot offend the taste of our readers by any

quotation from this execrable trash.' And when you plaster, you may wind up with, 'We regret that our limits will not allow us to give any extracts from this wonderful and unrivalled work. We must refer our readers to the book itself.'

"And, now, sir, I think I have given you a sufficient outline of the noble science of Scaliger and MacGrawler. Doubtless you are reconciled to the task I have allotted you; and while I tickle the Romance, you will slash the Inquiry and plaster the Epic!"

"I will do my best, sir!" said Paul, with that modest yet noble simplicity which becomes the virtuously ambitious; and MacGrawler forthwith gave him pen and paper, and set him down to his undertaking.

He had the good fortune to please MacGrawler, who, after having made a few corrections in style, declared he evinced a peculiar genius in that branch of composition. And then it was that Paul, made conceited by praise, said, looking contemptuously in the face of his preceptor, and swinging his legs to and fro, "And what, sir, shall I receive for the plastered Epic and the slashed Inquiry?" As the face of the schoolboy who, when guessing, as he thinks rightly, at the meaning of some mysterious word in "Cornelius Nepos," receiveth not the sugared epithet of praise, but a sudden stroke across the *os humerosve*,¹ even so, blank, puzzled, and thunder-stricken, waxed the face of Mr. MacGrawler, at the abrupt and astounding audacity of Paul.

"Receive!" he repeated, "receive! — Why, you impudent, ungrateful puppy, would you steal the bread from your old master? If I can obtain for your crude articles an admission into the illustrious pages of the 'Asinæum,' will you not be sufficiently paid, sir, by

¹ Face or shoulders.

the honor? Answer me that. Another man, young gentleman, would have charged you a premium for his instructions, — and here have I, in one lesson, imparted to you all the mysteries of the science, and for nothing! And you talk to me of ‘receive!’ — ‘receive!’ Young gentleman, in the words of the immortal bard, ‘I would as lief you had talked to me of ratsbane!’ ”

“In fine, then, Mr. MacGrawler, I shall get nothing for my trouble?” said Paul.

“To be sure not, sir; the very best writer in the ‘Asinæum’ only gets three shillings an article!” — Almost more than he deserves, the critic might have added; for he who writes for nobody should receive nothing!

“Then, sir,” quoth the mercenary Paul, profanely, and rising, he kicked with one kick the cat, the Epic, and the Inquiry, to the other end of the room, — “then, sir, you may all go to the devil!”

We do not, O gentle reader! seek to excuse this hasty anathema, — the habits of childhood will sometimes break forth, despite of the after blessings of education. And we set not up Paul for thine imitation as that model of virtue and of wisdom which we design thee to discover in MacGrawler.

When that great critic perceived Paul had risen and was retreating in high dudgeon towards the door, he rose also, and repeating Paul’s last words, said, “‘Go to the devil!’ Not so quick, young gentleman: *festina lente*, — all in good time. What though I did, astonished at your premature request, say that you should receive nothing; yet my great love for you may induce me to bestir myself on your behalf. The ‘Asinæum,’ it is true, only gives three shillings an article in general; but I am its editor, and will intercede with

the proprietors on your behalf. Yes, yes. I will see what is to be done. Stop a bit, my boy."

Paul, though very irascible, was easily pacified; he reseated himself, and taking MacGrawler's hand, said, —

"Forgive me for my petulance, my dear sir; but, to tell you the honest truth, I am very low in the world just at present, and must get money in some way or another: in short, I must either pick pockets or write (not gratuitously) for the 'Asinæum.' "

And, without farther preliminary, Paul related his present circumstances to the critic, declared his determination not to return to the "Mug," and requested, at least, from the friendship of his old preceptor the accommodation of shelter for that night.

MacGrawler was exceedingly disconcerted at hearing so bad an account of his pupil's finances as well as prospects; for he had secretly intended to regale himself that evening with a bowl of punch, for which he purposed that Paul should pay; but as he knew the quickness of parts possessed by the young gentleman, as also the great affection entertained for him by Mrs. Lobkins, who, in all probability, would solicit his return the next day, he thought it not unlikely that Paul would enjoy the same good fortune as that presiding over his feline companion, which, though it had just been kicked to the other end of the apartment, was now resuming its former occupation, unhurt, and no less merrily than before. He therefore thought it would be imprudent to discard his quondam pupil, despite of his present poverty, and, moreover, although the first happy project of pocketing all the profits derivable from Paul's industry was now abandoned, he still perceived great facility in pocketing a part of the same receipts. He therefore

answered Paul very warmly, that he fully sympathized with him in his present melancholy situation; that, so far as he was concerned, he would share his last *shilling* with his beloved pupil, but that he regretted at that moment he had only elevenpence halfpenny in his pocket; that he would, however, exert himself to the utmost in procuring an opening for Paul's literary genius; and that, if Paul liked to take the slashing and plastering part of the business on himself, he would willingly surrender it to him, and give him all the profits whatever they might be. *En attendant*, he regretted that a violent rheumatism prevented his giving up his own bed to his pupil, but that he might, with all the pleasure imaginable, sleep upon the rug before the fire. Paul was so affected by this kindness in the worthy man, that though not much addicted to the melting mood, he shed tears of gratitude; he insisted, however, on not receiving the whole reward of his labors; and at length it was settled, though with a noble reluctance on the part of MacGrawler, that it should be equally shared between the critic and the critic's *protégé*: the half profits being reasonably awarded to MacGrawler for his instructions and his recommendation.

CHAPTER VI.

Bad events peep out o' the tail of good purposes.

Bartholomew Fair.

It was not long before there was a visible improvement in the pages of the "Asinæum:" the slashing part of that incomparable journal was suddenly conceived and carried on with a vigor and spirit which astonished the hallowed few who contributed to its circulation. It was not difficult to see that a new soldier had been enlisted in the service; there was something so fresh and hearty about the abuse, that it could never have proceeded from the worn-out acerbity of an old *slasher*. To be sure, a little ignorance of ordinary facts, and an innovating method of applying words to meanings which they never were meant to denote, were now and then distinguishable in the criticisms of the new Achilles: nevertheless, it was easy to attribute these peculiarities to an original turn of thinking; and the rise of the paper upon the appearance of a series of articles upon contemporary authors, written by this "eminent hand," was so remarkable, that fifty copies — a number perfectly unprecedented in the annals of the "Asinæum" — were absolutely sold in one week: indeed, remembering the principle on which it was founded, one sturdy old writer declared, that the journal would soon do for itself and become popular. There was a remarkable peculiarity about the literary *débutant* who signed himself "Nobilitas." He not only put old words to a new sense, but he used words which had never, among the general run of

writers, been used before. This was especially remarkable in the application of hard names to authors. Once, in censuring a popular writer for pleasing the public, and thereby growing rich, the "eminent hand" ended with, "He who surreptitiously accumulates *bustle*¹ is, in fact, nothing better than a *buzz gloak*!"²

These enigmatical words and recondite phrases imparted a great air of learning to the style of the new critic; and, from the unintelligible sublimity of his diction, it seemed doubtful whether he was a poet from Highgate, or a philosopher from Königsburg. At all events, the reviewer preserved his incognito, and while his praises were rung at no less than three tea-tables, even glory appeared to him less delicious than disguise.

In this incognito, reader, thou hast already discovered Paul; and now we have to delight thee with a piece of unexampled morality in the excellent MacGrawler. That worthy Mentor, perceiving that there was an inherent turn for dissipation and extravagance in our hero, resolved magnanimously rather to bring upon himself the sins of treachery and mal-appropriation, than suffer his friend and former pupil to incur those of wastefulness and profusion. Contrary, therefore, to the agreement made with Paul, instead of giving that youth the half of those profits consequent on his brilliant lucubrations, he imparted to him only one-fourth, and, with the utmost tenderness for Paul's salvation, applied the other three portions of the same to his own necessities. The best actions are, alas! often misconstrued in this world; and we are now about to record a remarkable instance of that melancholy truth.

One evening MacGrawler, having "moistened his virtue" in the same manner that the great Cato is said

¹ Money.

² Pickpocket.

to have done, in the confusion which such a process sometimes occasions in the best-regulated heads, gave Paul what appeared to him the outline of a certain article which he wished to be slashingly filled up, but what in reality was the following note from the editor of a monthly periodical:—

SIR, — Understanding that my friend, Mr. —, proprietor of the “Asinæum,” allows the very distinguished writer whom you have introduced to the literary world, and who signs himself “Nobilitas,” only five shillings an article, I beg, through you, to tender him double that sum: the article required will be of an ordinary length. I am, sir, etc.

Now, that very morning, MacGrawler had informed Paul of this offer, altering only, from the amiable motives we have already explained, the sum of ten shillings to that of four; and no sooner did Paul read the communication we have placed before the reader, than, instead of gratitude to MacGrawler for his consideration of Paul's moral infirmities, he conceived against that gentleman the most bitter resentment. He did not, however, vent his feelings at once upon the Scotsman; indeed, at that moment, as the sage was in a deep sleep under the table, it would have been to no purpose had he unbridled his indignation. But he resolved without loss of time to quit the abode of the critic. “And, indeed,” said he, soliloquizing, “I am heartily tired of this life, and shall be very glad to seek some other employment. Fortunately, I have hoarded up five guineas and four shillings, and with that independence in my possession, since I have forsworn gambling, I cannot easily starve.”

To this soliloquy succeeded a misanthropical reverie upon the faithlessness of friends; and the meditation

ended in Paul's making up a little bundle of such clothes, etc., as Dummie had succeeded in removing from the "Mug," and which Paul had taken from the rag-merchant's abode one morning when Dummie was abroad.

When this easy task was concluded, Paul wrote a short and upbraiding note to his illustrious preceptor, and left it unsealed on the table. He then, upsetting the ink-bottle on MacGrawler's sleeping countenance, departed from the house, and strode away, he cared not whither.

The evening was gradually closing as Paul, chewing the cud of his bitter fancies, found himself on London Bridge. He paused there, and leaning over the bridge, gazed wistfully on the gloomy waters that rolled onward, caring not a minnow for the numerous charming young ladies who have thought proper to drown themselves in those merciless waves, thereby depriving many a good mistress of an excellent housemaid or an invaluable cook, and many a treacherous Phaon of letters beginning with "Parjured Villen," and ending with "Your affectionot but molancolly Molly."

While thus musing, he was suddenly accosted by a gentleman in boots and spurs, having a riding-whip in one hand, and the other hand stuck in the pocket of his inexpressibles. The hat of the gallant was gracefully and carefully put on, so as to derange as little as possible a profusion of dark curls which, streaming with unguents, fell low not only on either side of the face, but on the neck, and even the shoulders of the owner. The face was saturnine and strongly marked, but handsome and striking. There was a mixture of frippery and sternness in its expression: something between Madame Vestris and T. P. Cooke, or between "lovely Sally"

and a "Captain bold of Halifax." The stature of this personage was remarkably tall, and his figure was stout, muscular, and well knit. In fine, to complete his portrait, and give our readers of the present day an exact idea of this hero of the past, we shall add, that he was altogether that sort of gentleman one sees swaggering in the Burlington Arcade, with his hair and hat on one side, and a military cloak thrown over his shoulders, — or prowling in Regent Street towards the evening, whiskered and cigared.

Laying his hand on the shoulder of our hero, this gentleman said, with an affected intonation of voice, —

"How dost, my fine fellow? — long since I saw you! — dammee, but you look the worse for wear! What hast thou been doing with thyself?"

"Ha!" cried our hero, returning the salutation of the stranger, "and is it Long Ned whom I behold? I am indeed glad to meet you; and I say, my friend, I hope what I heard of you is not true?"

"Hist!" said Long Ned, looking round fearfully, and sinking his voice; "never talk of what you hear of gentlemen, except you wish to bring them to their last dying speech and confession. But come with me, my lad; there is a tavern hard by, and we may as well discuss matters over a pint of wine. You look cursed seedy, to be sure, but I can tell Bill the waiter — famous fellow, that Bill! — that you are one of my tenants, come to complain of my steward, who has just distrained you for rent, you dog! No wonder you look so worn in the rigging. Come, follow me. I can't walk *with* thee. It would look too like Northumberland House and the butcher's abode next door taking a stroll together."

"Really, Mr. Pepper," said our hero, coloring, and

by no means pleased with the ingenious comparison of his friend, "if you are ashamed of my clothes, which I own might be newer, I will not wound you with my —"

"Pooh! my lad, — pooh!" cried Long Ned, interrupting him; "never take offence. *I* never do. I never take anything but money, — except, indeed, watches. I don't mean to hurt your feelings: all of us have been poor once. 'Gad, I remember when I had not a dud to my back, and now, you see me, — you see me, Paul! But come, 't is only through the streets you need separate from me. Keep a little behind, — very little; that will do. Ay, that will do," repeated Long Ned, mutteringly to himself, "they 'll take him for a bailiff. It looks handsome nowadays to be so attended. It shows one *had credit once!*"

Meanwhile Paul, though by no means pleased with the contempt expressed for his personal appearance by his lengthy associate, and impressed with a keener sense than ever of the crimes of his coat and the vices of his other garment, — "oh, breathe not its name!" — followed doggedly and sullenly the strutting steps of the coxcombical Mr. Pepper. That personage arrived at last at a small tavern, and arresting a waiter who was running across the passage into the coffee-room with a dish of hung-beef, demanded (no doubt from a pleasing anticipation of a similar pendulous catastrophe) a plate of the same excellent cheer, to be carried, in company with a bottle of port, into a private apartment. No sooner did he find himself alone with Paul than, bursting into a loud laugh, Mr. Ned surveyed his comrade from head to foot, through an eye-glass, which he wore fastened to his button-hole by a piece of blue ribbon.

"Well, — 'gad now," said he, stopping ever and anon, as if to laugh the more heartily, — "stab my vitals, but

you are a comical quiz; I wonder what the women would say, if they saw the dashing Edward Pepper, Esquire, walking arm in arm with thee at Ranelagh or Vauxhall? Nay, man, never be downcast: if I laugh at thee, it is only to make thee look a little merrier thyself. Why, thou lookest like a book of my grandfather's called 'Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy;' and, faith, a shabbier bound copy of it I never saw."

"These jests are a little hard," said Paul, struggling between anger and an attempt to smile; and then recollecting his late literary occupations, and the many extracts he had taken from 'Gleanings of the Belles Lettres,' in order to impart elegance to his criticisms, he threw out his hand theatrically, and spouted with a solemn face, —

'Of all the griefs that harass the distressed,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest!'

"Well now, prithee forgive me," said Long Ned, composing his features; "and just tell me what you have been doing the last two months."

"Slashing and plastering!" said Paul, with conscious pride.

"Slashing and what! The boy's mad, — what do you mean, Paul?"

"In other words," said our hero, speaking very slowly, "know, O very Long Ned! that I have been critic to the 'Asinæum.'"

If Paul's comrade laughed at first, he now laughed ten times more merrily than ever. He threw his length of limb upon a neighboring sofa, and literally rolled with cachinnatory convulsions; nor did his risible emotions subside until the entrance of the hung-beef restored him to recollection. Seeing, then, that a cloud lowered

over Paul's countenance, he went up to him, with something like gravity, begged his pardon for his want of politeness, and desired him to wash away all unkindness in a bumper of port. Paul, whose excellent dispositions we have before had occasion to remark, was not impervious to his friend's apologies. He assured Long Ned that he quite forgave him for his ridicule of the high situation he (Paul) had enjoyed in the literary world; that it was the duty of a public censor to bear no malice; and that he should be very glad to take his share in the interment of the hung-beef.

The pair now set down to their repast, and Paul, who had fared but meagrely in that Temple of Athena over which MacGrawler presided, did ample justice to the viands before him. By degrees, as he ate and drank, his heart opened to his companion; and, laying aside that "Asinæum" dignity which he had at first thought it incumbent on him to assume, he entertained Pepper with all the particulars of the life he had lately passed. He narrated to him his breach with Dame Lobkins, his agreement with MacGrawler, the glory he had acquired, and the wrongs he had sustained; and he concluded, as now the second bottle made its appearance, by stating his desire of exchanging, for some more active profession, that sedentary career which he had so promisingly begun.

This last part of Paul's confessions secretly delighted the soul of Long Ned; for that experienced collector of the highways (Ned was, indeed, of no less noble a profession) had long fixed an eye upon our hero, as one whom he thought likely to be an honor to that enterprising calling which he espoused, and a useful assistant to himself. He had not, in his earlier acquaintance with Paul, when the youth was under the roof and the *surveillance* of the practised and wary Mrs. Lobkins,

deemed it prudent to expose the exact nature of his own pursuits, and had contented himself by gradually ripening the mind and the finances of Paul into that state when the proposition of a leap from a hedge would not be likely greatly to revolt the person to whom it was made. He now thought that time near at hand; and filling our hero's glass up to the brim, thus artfully addressed him: —

“Courage, my friend! — your narration has given me a sensible pleasure; for, curse me if it has not strengthened my favorite opinion, that everything is for the best. If it had not been for the meanness of that pitiful fellow, MacGrawler, you might still be inspired with the paltry ambition of earning a few shillings a week, and vilifying a parcel of poor devils in the what-d’ye-call-it, with a hard name; whereas now, my good Paul, I trust I shall be able to open to your genius a new career, in which guineas are had for the asking, — in which you may wear fine clothes, and ogle the ladies at Ranelagh; and when you are tired of glory and liberty, Paul, why you have only to make your bow to an heiress, or a widow with a spanking jointure, and quit the hum of men like a Cincinnatus!”

Though Paul's perception into the abstruser branches of morals was not very acute, and at that time the port wine had considerably confused the few notions he possessed upon “the beauty of virtue,” yet he could not but perceive that Mr. Pepper's insinuated proposition was far from being one which the bench of bishops, or a synod of moralists, would conscientiously have approved: he consequently remained silent; and Long Ned, after a pause, continued, —

“You know my genealogy, my good fellow? — I was the son of Lawyer Pepper, a shrewd old dog, but as hot

as Calcutta; and the grandson of Sexton Pepper, a great author, who wrote verses on tombstones, and kept a stall of religious tracts in Carlisle. My grandfather, the sexton, was the best temper of the family; for all of us are a little inclined to be hot in the mouth. Well, my fine fellow, my father left me his blessing, and this devilish good head of hair. I lived for some years on my own resources. I found it a particularly inconvenient mode of life, and of late I have taken to live on the public. My father and grandfather did it before me, though in a different line. 'Tis the pleasantest plan in the world. Follow my example, and your coat shall be as spruce as my own. Master Paul, your health!"

"But, O longest of mortals!" said Paul, refilling his glass, "though the public may allow you to eat your mutton off their backs for a short time, they will kick up at last, and upset you and your banquet: in other words (pardon my metaphor, dear Ned, in remembrance of the part I have lately maintained in the 'Asinæum,' that most magnificent and metaphorical of journals!) — in other words, the police will nab thee at last; and thou wilt have the distinguished fate, as thou already hast the distinguishing characteristic — of Absalom!"

"You mean that I shall be hanged," said Long Ned. "That may or may not be; but he who fears death never enjoys life. Consider, Paul, that though hanging is a bad fate, starving is a worse; wherefore fill your glass, and let us drink to the health of that great donkey, the people, and may we never want saddles to ride it!"

"To the great donkey," cried Paul, tossing off his bumper; "may your (*y*)ears be as long! But I own to you, my friend, that I cannot enter into your plans. And, as a token of my resolution, I shall drink no more, for my eyes already begin to dance in the air; and if I

listen longer to your resistless eloquence, my feet may share the same fate ! ”

So saying, Paul rose ; nor could any entreaty on the part of his entertainer persuade him to resume his seat.

“ Nay, as you will,” said Pepper, affecting a *nonchalant* tone, and arranging his cravat before the glass, — “ nay, as you will. Ned Pepper requires no man’s companionship against his liking : and if the noble spark of ambition be not in your bosom, ’t is no use spending my breath in blowing at what only existed in my too flattering opinion of your qualities. So, then, you propose to return to MacGrawler (the scurvy old cheat !), and pass the inglorious remainder of your life in the mangling of authors and the murder of grammar ? Go, my good fellow, go ! scribble again and forever for MacGrawler, and let him live upon thy brains, instead of suffering thy brains to — ”

“ Hold ! ” cried Paul. “ Although I may have some scruples which prevent my adoption of that rising line of life you have proposed to me, yet you are very much mistaken if you imagine me so spiritless as any longer to subject myself to the frauds of that rascal MacGrawler. No ! My present intention is to pay my old nurse a visit. It appears to me passing strange, that though I have left her so many weeks, she has never relented enough to track me out, which one would think would have been no difficult matter : and now you see that I am pretty well off, having five guineas and four shillings, all my own, and she can scarcely think I want her money. My heart melts to her, and I shall go and ask pardon for my haste ! ”

“ Pshaw ! sentimental,” cried Long Ned, a little alarmed at the thought of Paul’s gliding from those clutches which he thought had now so firmly closed

upon him. "Why, you surely don't mean, after having once tasted the joys of independence, to go back to the boozing ken, and bear all Mother Lobkins's drunken tantarums! Better have stayed with MacGrawler of the two!"

"You mistake me," answered Paul; "I mean solely to make it up with her, and get her permission to see the world. My ultimate intention is — to travel."

"Right," cried Ned; "on the high-road, — and on horseback, I hope!"

"No, my Colossus of Roads! No! I am in doubt whether or not I shall enlist in a marching-regiment; or (give me your advice on it) I fancy I have a great turn for the stage, ever since I saw Garrick in 'Richard.' Shall I turn stroller? It must be a merry life."

"Oh, the devil!" cried Ned. "I myself once did 'Cassio' in a barn, and every one swore I enacted the drunken scene to perfection; but you have no notion what a lamentable life it is to a man of any susceptibility. No, my friend. No! There is only one line in all the old plays worthy thy attention, —

*'Toby or not toby,*¹ that is the question.'

I forget the rest!"

"Well!" said our hero, answering in the same jocular vein, "I confess I have 'the actor's high ambition.' It is astonishing how my heart beat, when Richard cried out, 'Come, *bustle,*² *bustle!*' Yes, Pepper avaut! —

'A thousand hearts are great within my bosom.'"

"Well, well," said Long Ned, stretching himself; "since you are so fond of the play, what say you to an excursion thither to-night? Garrick acts!"

¹ The highway.

² Money.

"Done!" cried Paul.

"Done!" echoed lazily Long Ned, rising with that *blasé* air which distinguishes the matured man of the world from the enthusiastic tyro, — "done! and we will adjourn afterwards to the 'White Horse.'"

"But stay a moment," said Paul; "if you remember, I owed you a guinea when I last saw you: here it is!"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Long Ned, refusing the money, — "nonsense! you want the money at present; pay me when you are richer. Nay, never be coy about it: debts of honor are not paid now as they used to be. We lads of the Fish Lane Club have changed all that. Well, well, if I must."

And Long Ned, seeing that Paul insisted, pocketed the guinea. When this delicate matter had been arranged, —

"Come," said Pepper, — "come, get your hat; but, bless me! I have forgotten one thing."

"What?"

"Why, my fine Paul, consider, the play is a bang-up sort of a place; look at your coat and your waistcoat, that's all!"

Our hero was struck dumb with this *argumentum ad hominem*. But Long Ned, after enjoying his perplexity, relieved him of it by telling him that he knew of an honest tradesman who kept a ready-made shop, just by the theatre, and who would fit him out in a moment.

In fact Long Ned was as good as his word; he carried Paul to a tailor, who gave him for the sum of thirty shillings, half ready money, half on credit, a green coat with a tarnished gold lace, a pair of red inexpressibles, and a pepper-and-salt waistcoat; it is true they were somewhat of the largest, for they had once belonged to

no less a person than Long Ned himself: but Paul did not then regard those niceties of apparel, as he was subsequently taught to do by Gentleman George (a personage hereafter to be introduced to our reader), and he went to the theatre, as well satisfied with himself as if he had been Mr. T—— or the Count de M——.

Our adventurers are now quietly seated in the theatre, and we shall not think it necessary to detail the performances they saw, or the observations they made. Long Ned was one of those superior beings of the road who would not for the world have condescended to appear anywhere but in the boxes, and, accordingly, the friends procured a couple of places in the dress-tier. In the next box to the one our adventurers adorned, they remarked, more especially than the rest of the audience, a gentleman and a young lady seated next each other; the latter, who was about thirteen years old, was so uncommonly beautiful, that Paul, despite his dramatic enthusiasm, could scarcely divert his eyes from her countenance to the stage. Her hair, of a bright and fair auburn, hung in profuse ringlets about her neck, shedding a softer shade upon a complexion in which the roses seemed just budding, as it were, into blush. Her eyes, large, blue, and rather languishing than brilliant, were curtained by the darkest lashes; her mouth seemed literally girt with smiles, so numberless were the dimples, that every time the full, ripe, dewy lips were parted, rose into sight; and the enchantment of the dimples was aided by two rows of teeth more dazzling than the richest pearls that ever glittered on a bride. But the chief charm of the face was its exceeding and touching air of innocence and girlish softness; you might have gazed forever upon that first, unspeakable bloom, that all untouched and stainless down, which seemed

as if a very breath could mar it. Perhaps the face might have wanted animation; but, perhaps, also, it borrowed from that want an attraction; the repose of the features was so soft and gentle that the eye wandered there with the same delight, and left it with the same reluctance, which it experiences in dwelling on or in quitting those hues which are found to harmonize the most with its vision. But while Paul was feeding his gaze on this young beauty, the keen glances of Long Ned had found an object no less fascinating in a large gold watch, which the gentleman who accompanied the damsel ever and anon brought to his eye, as if he were waxing a little weary of the length of the pieces, or the lingering progression of time.

"What a beautiful face!" whispered Paul.

"Is the face gold, then, as well as the back?" whispered Long Ned, in return.

Our hero started, frowned, — and despite the gigantic stature of his comrade, told him very angrily to find some other subject for jesting. Ned in his turn stared, but made no reply.

Meanwhile Paul, though the lady was rather too young to fall in love with, began wondering what relationship her companion bore to her. Though the gentleman altogether was handsome, yet his features, and the whole character of his face, were widely different from those on which Paul gazed with such delight. He was not, seemingly, above five-and-forty, but his forehead was knit into many a line and furrow; and in his eyes the light, though searching, was more sober and staid than became his years. A disagreeable expression played about the mouth, and the shape of the face, which was long and thin, considerably detracted from the prepossessing effect of a handsome, aquiline

nose, fine teeth, and a dark, manly, though sallow complexion. There was a mingled air of shrewdness and distraction in the expression of his face. He seemed to pay very little attention to the play, or to anything about him; but he testified very considerable alacrity, when the play was over, in putting her cloak around his young companion, and in threading their way through the thick crowd that the boxes were now pouring forth.

Paul and his companion silently, and each with very different motives from the other, followed them. They were now at the door of the theatre.

A servant stepped forward and informed the gentleman that his carriage was a few paces distant, but that it might be some time before it could drive up to the theatre.

"Can you walk to the carriage, my dear?" said the gentleman to his young charge; and she answering in the affirmative, they both left the house, preceded by the servant.

"Come on!" said Long Ned, hastily, and walking in the same direction which the strangers had taken. Paul readily agreed; they soon overtook the strangers. Long Ned walked the nearest to the gentleman, and brushed by him in passing. Presently a voice cried, "Stop thief!" and Long Ned, saying to Paul, "Shift for yourself, — run!" darted from our hero's side into the crowd, and vanished in a twinkling. Before Paul could recover his amaze, he found himself suddenly seized by the collar; he turned abruptly, and saw the dark face of the young lady's companion.

"Rascal!" cried the gentleman, "my watch!"

"Watch!" repeated Paul, bewildered, and only for the sake of the young lady refraining from knocking down his arrester, — "watch!"

"Ay, young man!" cried a fellow in a greatcoat, who now suddenly appeared on the other side of Paul; "this gentleman's watch: please your honor," addressing the complainant, "*I* be a watch too, — shall I take up this chap?"

"By all means," cried the gentleman; "I would not have lost my watch for twice its value. I can swear I saw this fellow's companion snatch it from my fob. The thief's gone; but we have at least the accomplice. I give him in strict charge to you, watchman; take the consequences if you let him escape."

The watchman answered, sullenly, that he did not want to be threatened, and he knew how to discharge his duty.

"Don't answer me, fellow!" said the gentleman, haughtily; "do as I tell you!" And, after a little colloquy, Paul found himself suddenly marched off between two tall fellows, who looked prodigiously inclined to eat him. By this time he had recovered his surprise and dismay: he did not want the penetration to see that his companion had really committed the offence for which *he* was charged; and he also foresaw that the circumstance might be attended with disagreeable consequences to himself. Under all the features of the case, he thought that an attempt to escape would not be an imprudent proceeding on his part; accordingly, after moving a few paces very quietly and very passively, he watched his opportunity, wrenched himself from the gripe of the gentleman on his left, and brought the hand thus released against the cheek of the gentleman on his right with so hearty a goodwill as to cause him to relinquish his hold and retreat several paces towards the areas in a slanting position. But that roundabout sort of blow with the left fist is very unfavorable towards the preservation of a

firm balance; and before Paul had recovered sufficiently to make an effectual "bolt," he was prostrated to the earth by a blow from the other and undamaged watchman, which utterly deprived him of his senses; and when he recovered those useful possessions (which a man may reasonably boast of losing, since it is only the minority who have them to lose), he found himself stretched on a bench in the watchhouse.

CHAPTER VII.

Begirt with many a gallant slave,
 Apparell'd as becomes the brave,
 Old Giaffir sat in his divan:

Much I misdoubt this wayward boy
 Will one day work me more annoy.

Bride of Abydos.

THE learned and ingenious John Schweighæuser (a name facile to spell and mellifluous to pronounce) hath been pleased, in that *Appendix continens particulam doctrinæ de mente humanâ*, which closeth the volume of his *Opuscula Academica*, to observe (we translate from memory), that "in the infinite variety of things which in the theatre of the world occur to a man's survey, or in some manner or another affect his body or his mind, by far the greater part are so contrived as to bring to him rather some sense of pleasure than of pain or discomfort." Assuming that this holds generally good in well-constituted frames, we point out a notable example in the case of the incarcerated Paul; for, although that youth was in no agreeable situation at the time present, and although nothing very encouraging smiled upon him from the prospects of the future, yet, as soon as he had recovered his consciousness, and given himself a rousing shake, he found an immediate source of pleasure in discovering, first, that several ladies and gentlemen bore him company in his imprisonment; and, secondly, in perceiving a huge jug of water within his reach, which, as his awaking sensation was that of burn-

ing thirst, he delightedly emptied at a draught. He then, stretching himself, looked around with a wistful earnestness, and discovered a back turned towards him, and recumbent on the floor, which, at the very first glance, appeared to him familiar. "Surely," thought he, "I know that frieze coat, and the peculiar turn of those narrow shoulders." Thus soliloquizing, he raised himself, and putting out his leg, he gently kicked the reclining form. "Muttering strange oaths," the form turned round, and, raising itself upon that inhospitable part of the body in which the introduction of foreign feet is considered anything but an honor, it fixed its dull, blue eyes upon the face of the disturber of its slumbers, gradually opening them wider and wider, until they seemed to have enlarged themselves into proportions fit for the swallowing of the important truth that burst upon them, and then from the mouth of the creature issued, —

"Queer my glims, if that be n't little Paul!"

"Ay, Dummie, here I am! Not been long without being laid by the heels, you see! Life is short; we must make the best use of our time!"

Upon this, Mr. Dunnaker (it was no less respectable a person) scrambled up from the floor, and seating himself on the bench beside Paul, said, in a pitying tone, —

"Vy, laus-a-me! if you be n't knocked o' the head. Your pole's as bloody as Murphy's face¹ ven his throat's cut!"

"'Tis only the fortune of war, Dummie, and a mere trifle: the heads manufactured at Thames Court are not easily put out of order. But, tell me, how come you here?"

¹ "Murphy's face," unlearned reader, appeareth, in Irish phrase, to mean "pig's head."

"Vy, I had been lushing heavy vet —"

"Till you grew light in the head, eh, and fell into the kennel?"

"Yes."

"Mine is a worse business than that, I fear:" and therewith Paul, in a lower voice, related to the trusty Dummie the train of accidents which had conducted him to his present asylum. Dummie's face elongated as he listened; however, when the narrative was over, he endeavored such consolatory palliatives as occurred to him. He represented, first, the possibility that the gentleman might not take the trouble to appear; secondly, the certainty that no watch was found about Paul's person; thirdly, the fact that, even by the gentleman's confession, Paul had not been the actual offender; fourthly, if the worst came to the worst, what were a few weeks', or even months' imprisonment?

"Blow me tight!" said Dummie, "if it be n't as good a vay of passing the time as a cove as is fond of snuggery need desire!"

This observation had no comfort for Paul, who recoiled, with all the maiden coyness of one to whom such unions are unfamiliar, from a matrimonial alliance with the *snuggery* of the House of Correction. He rather trusted to another source for consolation. In a word, he encouraged the flattering belief, that Long Ned finding that Paul had been caught instead of himself, would have the generosity to come forward and exculpate him from the charge. On hinting this idea to Dummie, that accomplished "man about town" could not for some time believe that any simpleton could be so thoroughly unacquainted with the world as seriously to entertain so ridiculous a notion; and, indeed, it is somewhat remarkable that such a hope should ever have

told its flattering tale to one brought up in the house of Mrs. Margaret Lobkins. But Paul, we have seen, had formed many of his notions from books; and he had the same fine theories of your "moral rogue" that possess the minds of young patriots when they first leave college for the House of Commons, and think integrity a prettier thing than office.

Mr. Dunnaker urged Paul seriously to dismiss so vague and childish a fancy from his breast, and rather to think of what line of defence it would be best for him to pursue. This subject being at length exhausted, Paul recurred to Mrs. Lobkins, and inquired whether Dummie had lately honored that lady with a visit.

Mr. Dunnaker replied that he had, though with much difficulty, appeased her anger against him for his supposed abetment of Paul's excesses, and that of late she had held sundry conversations with Dummie respecting our hero himself. Upon questioning Dummie further, Paul learned the good matron's reasons for not evincing that solicitude for his return which our hero had reasonably anticipated. The fact was, that she, having no confidence whatsoever in his own resources independent of her, had not been sorry of an opportunity effectually, as she hoped, to humble that pride which had so revolted her; and she pleased her vanity by anticipating the time when Paul, starved into submission, would gladly and penitently re-seek the shelter of her roof; and, tamed as it were by experience, would never again kick against the yoke which her matronly prudence thought it fitting to impose upon him. She contented herself, then, with obtaining from Dummie the intelligence that our hero was under MacGrawler's roof and therefore out of all absolute evil; and as she could not foresee the ingenious exertions of intellect by which

Paul had converted himself into the "Nobilitas" of the "Asinæum," and thereby saved himself from utter penury, she was perfectly convinced, from her knowledge of character, that the illustrious MacGrawler would not long continue that protection to the rebellious *protégé*, which, in her opinion, was his only preservative from picking pockets or famishing. To the former decent alternative she knew Paul's great and jejune aversion, and she consequently had little fear for his morals or his safety in thus abandoning him for a while to chance. Any anxiety, too, that she might otherwise have keenly experienced was deadened by the habitual intoxication now increasing upon the good lady with age, and which, though at times she could be excited to all her characteristic vehemence, kept her senses for the most part plunged into a Lethæan stupor; or, to speak more courteously, into a poetical abstraction from the things of the external world.

"But," said Dummie, as by degrees he imparted the solution of the dame's conduct to the listening ear of his companion, — "but I hopes as how ven you be out of this ere scrape, leetle Paul, you vill take varning, and drop Meester Pepper's acquaintancè (vich, I must say, I vas always a sorry to see you hencourage), and go home to the 'Mug,' and fam grasp the old mort; for she has not been like the same cretur ever since you vent. She's a delicate-arted oman, that Piggy Lob!"

So appropriate a panegyric on Mrs. Margaret Lobkins might, at another time, have excited Paul's risible muscles; but at that moment he really felt compunction for the unceremonious manner in which he had left her, and the softness of regretful affection imbued in its hallowing colors even the image of Piggy Lob.

In conversation of this intellectual and domestic description, the night and ensuing morning passed away, till Paul found himself in the awful presence of Justice Burnflat. Several cases were disposed of before his own, and, among others, Mr. Dummie Dunnaker obtained his release, though not without a severe reprimand for his sin of inebriety, which no doubt sensibly affected the ingenuous spirit of that noble character. At length Paul's turn came. He heard, as he took his station, a general buzz. At first he imagined it was at his own interesting appearance; but, raising his eyes, he perceived that it was at the entrance of the gentleman who was to become his accuser.

"Hush," said some one near him, "'tis Lawyer Brandon. Ah, he's a 'cute fellow! It will go hard with the person he complains of."

There was a happy fund of elasticity of spirit about our hero; and, though he had not the good fortune to have "a blighted heart," — a circumstance which, by the poets and philosophers of the present day, is supposed to inspire a man with wonderful courage, and make him impervious to all misfortunes, — yet he bore himself up with wonderful courage under his present trying situation, and was far from overwhelmed, though he was certainly a little damped by the observation he had just heard.

Mr. Brandon was, indeed, a barrister of considerable reputation, and in high esteem in the world, not only for talent, but also, for a great austerity of manners, which, though a little mingled with sternness and acerbity for the errors of other men, was naturally thought the more praiseworthy on that account; there being, as persons of experience are doubtless aware, two divisions in the first class of morality: *imprimis*, a

great hatred for the vices of one's neighbor; secondly, the possession of virtues in one's self.

Mr. Brandon was received with great courtesy by Justice Burnflat, and, as he came watch in hand (a borrowed watch), saying that his time was worth five guineas a moment, the justice proceeded immediately to business.

Nothing could be clearer, shorter, or more satisfactory than the evidence of Mr. Brandon. The corroborative testimony of the watchman followed; and then Paul was called upon for his defence. This was equally brief with the charge, — but, alas! it was not equally satisfactory. It consisted in a firm declaration of his innocence. His comrade, he confessed, might have stolen the watch, but he humbly suggested that that was exactly the very reason why *he* had *not* stolen it.

"How long, fellow," asked Justice Burnflat, "have you known your companion?"

"About half a year!"

"And what is his name and calling?"

Paul hesitated, and declined to answer.

"A sad piece of business!" said the justice, in a melancholy tone, and shaking his head portentously.

The lawyer acquiesced in the aphorism; but, with great magnanimity, observed that he did not wish to be hard upon the young man. His youth was in his favor, and his offence was probably the consequence of evil company. He suggested, therefore, that as he must be perfectly aware of the address of his friend, he should receive a full pardon if he would immediately favor the magistrate with that information. He concluded by remarking, with singular philanthropy, that it was not the punishment of the youth, but the recovery of his watch, that he desired.

Justice Burnflat, having duly impressed upon our hero's mind the disinterested and Christian mercy of the complainant, and the everlasting obligation Paul was under to him for its display, now repeated, with double solemnity, those queries respecting the habitation and name of Long Ned which our hero had before declined to answer.

Grieved are we to confess that Paul, ungrateful for, and wholly untouched by the beautiful benignity of Lawyer Brandon, continued firm in his stubborn denial to betray his comrade, and, with equal obduracy, he continued to insist upon his own innocence and unblemished respectability of character.

"Your name, young man?" quoth the justice. "Your name, you say, is Paul,—Paul what? You have many an *alias*, I'll be bound."

Here the young gentleman again hesitated; at length he replied, —

"Paul Lobkins, your worship."

"Lobkins!" repeated the judge. "Lobkins! come hither, Saunders: have not we that name down in our black books?"

"So please your worship," quoth a little, stout man, very useful in many respects to the Festus of the police, "there is one Peggy Lobkins, who keeps a public-house, a sort of flash ken, called the 'Mug,' in Thames Court, not exactly in our beat, your worship."

"Ho, ho!" said Justice Burnflat, winking at Mr. Brandon; "we must sift this a little. Pray, Mr. Paul Lobkins, what relation is the good landlady of the 'Mug,' in Thames Court, to yourself?"

"None at all, sir," said Paul, hastily, — "she's only a friend!"

Upon this there was a laugh in the court.

"Silence!" cried the justice: "and I daresay, Mr. Paul Lobkins, that this friend of yours will vouch for the respectability of your character, upon which you are pleased to value yourself?"

"I have not a doubt of it, sir," answered Paul; and there was another laugh.

"And is there any other equally weighty and praiseworthy friend of yours, who will do you the like kindness?"

Paul hesitated; and, at that moment, to the surprise of the court, but, above all, to the utter and astounding surprise of himself, two gentlemen, dressed in the height of the fashion, pushed forward, and, bowing to the justice, declared themselves ready to vouch for the thorough respectability and unimpeachable character of Mr. Paul Lobkins, whom they had known, they said, for many years, and for whom they had the greatest respect. While Paul was surveying the persons of these kind friends, whom he never remembered to have seen before in the course of his life, the lawyer, who was a very sharp fellow, whispered to the magistrate; and that dignitary, nodding as in assent, and eying the newcomers, inquired the names of Mr. Lobkins's witnesses.

"Mr. Eustace Fitzherbert and Mr. William Howard Russell," were the several replies.

Names so aristocratic produced a general sensation. But the impenetrable justice, calling the same Mr. Saunders he had addressed before, asked him to examine well the countenances of Mr. Lobkins's friends.

As the alguazil eyed the features of the memorable Don Raphael and the illustrious Manuel Morales, when the former of those accomplished personages thought it convenient to assume the travelling dignity of an Italian prince, son of the sovereign of the valleys which lie

between Switzerland, the Milanese, and Savoy, while the latter was contented with being servant to *Monseigneur le Prince*, — even so, with far more earnestness than respect did Mr. Saunders eye the features of those high-born gentlemen, Messrs. Eustace Fitzherbert and William Howard Russell; but, after a long survey, he withdrew his eyes, made an unsatisfactory and unrecognized gesture to the magistrate, and said, "Please your worship, they are none of my flock; but Bill Troutling knows more of this sort of genteel chaps than I does."

"Bid Billy Troutling appear!" was the laconic order.

At that name a certain modest confusion might have been visible in the faces of Mr. Eustace Fitzherbert and Mr. William Howard Russell, had not the attention of the court been immediately directed to another case. A poor woman had been committed for seven days to the House of Correction on a charge of *disrespectability*. Her husband, the person most interested in the matter, now came forward to disprove the charge; and, by help of his neighbors, he succeeded.

"It is all very true," said Justice Burnflat; "but as your wife, my good fellow, will be out in five days, it will be scarcely worth while to release her now."¹

So judicious a decision could not fail of satisfying the husband; and the audience became from that moment enlightened as to a very remarkable truth, — namely, that five days out of seven bear a peculiarly small proportion to the remaining two; and that people in England have so prodigious a love for punishment, that though it is not worth while to release an innocent woman from prison five days sooner than one would

¹ A fact occurring in the month of January, 1830. — *Vide the Morning Herald*.

otherwise have done, it is exceedingly well worth while to commit her to prison for seven!

When the husband, drawing his rough hand across his eyes, and muttering some vulgar impertinence or another, had withdrawn, Mr. Saunders said, —

“Here be Bill Troutling, your worship.”

“Oh, well,” quoth the justice; “and now, Mr. Eustace Fitz — Hollo, how’s this! where are Mr. William Howard Russell and his friend Mr. Eustacè Fitzherbert?”

“Echo answered, — Where?”

These noble gentlemen, having a natural dislike to be confronted with so low a person as Mr. Bill Troutling, had, the instant public interest was directed from them, silently disappeared from a scene where their rank in life seemed so little regarded. If, reader, you should be anxious to learn from what part of the world the transitory visitants appeared, know that they were spirits sent by that inimitable magician, Long Ned, partly to report how matters fared in the court; for Mr. Pepper, in pursuance of that old policy which teaches that the nearer the fox is to the hunters, the more chance he has of being overlooked, had, immediately on his abrupt departure from Paul, dived into a house in the very street where his ingenuity had displayed itself, and in which oysters and ale nightly allured and regaled an assembly that, to speak impartially, was more numerous than select: there had he learned how a pickpocket had been seized for unlawful affection to another man’s watch; and there, while he quietly seasoned his oysters, had he, with his characteristic acuteness, satisfied his mind by the conviction that that arrested unfortunate was no other than Paul. Partly, therefore, as a precaution for

his own safety, that he might receive early intelligence should Paul's defence make a change of residence expedient, and partly (out of the friendliness of fellowship) to back his companion with such aid as the favorable testimony of two well-dressed persons, little known "about town," might confer, he had despatched those celestial beings who had appeared under the mortal names of Eustace Fitzherbert and William Howard Russell to the imperial court of Justice Burnflat. Having thus accounted for the apparition (the *disapparition* requires no commentary) of Paul's "friends," we return to Paul himself.

Despite the perils with which he was girt, our young hero fought out to the last: but the justice was not by any means willing to displease Mr. Brandon; and observing that an incredulous and biting sneer remained stationary on that gentleman's lip during the whole of Paul's defence, he could not but shape his decision according to the well-known acuteness of the celebrated lawyer. Paul was accordingly sentenced to retire for three months to that country-house situated at Bridewell to which the ungrateful functionaries of justice often banish their most active citizens.

As soon as the sentence was passed Brandon, whose keen eyes saw no hope of recovering his lost treasure, declared that the rascal had perfectly the Old Bailey cut of countenance; and that he did not doubt but, if ever he lived to be a judge, he should also live to pass a very different description of sentence on the offender.

So saying, he resolved to lose no more time, and very abruptly left the office, without any other comfort than the remembrance that, at all events, he had sent the boy to a place where, let him be ever so innocent at present, he was certain to come out as much inclined to be

guilty as his friends could desire; joined to such moral reflection as the tragedy of "Bombastes Furioso" might have afforded to himself in that sententious and terse line, —

"Thy watch is gone, — watches are made *to go* !"

Meanwhile Paul was conducted in state to his retreat, in company with two other offenders, — one a middle-aged man, though a very old "*file*," who was sentenced for getting money under false pretences; and the other a little boy, who had been found guilty of sleeping under a colonnade, — it being the especial beauty of the English law to make no fine-drawn and nonsensical shades of difference between vice and misfortune, and its peculiar method of protecting the honest being to make as many rogues as possible in as short a space of time.

CHAPTER VIII.

Common Sense.—What is the end of punishment as regards the individual punished?

Custom.—To make him better!

Common Sense.—How do you punish young offenders who are (from their youth) peculiarly alive to example, and whom it is therefore more easy either to ruin or reform than the matured?

Custom.—We send them to the House of Correction, to associate with the d—dest rascals in the country!

Dialogue between Common Sense and Custom.—*Very scarce.*

As it was rather late in the day when Paul made his first *entrée* at Bridewell, he passed that night in the "receiving-room." The next morning, as soon as he had been examined by the surgeon and clothed in the customary uniform, he was ushered, according to his classification, among the good company who had been considered guilty of that compendious offence, "a misdemeanor." Here a tall gentleman marched up to him, and addressed him in a certain language which might be called the freemasonry of flash; and which Paul, though he did not comprehend *verbatim*, rightly understood to be an inquiry whether he was a thorough rogue and an entire rascal. He answered half in confusion, half in anger; and his reply was so detrimental to any favorable influence he might otherwise have exercised over the interrogator, that the latter personage, giving him a pinch in the ear, shouted out "Ramp, ramp!" and, at that significant and awful word, Paul found himself surrounded in a trice by a whole host of ingenious tormentors. One pulled this member, another pinched

that; one cuffed him before, and another thrashed him behind. By way of interlude to this pleasing occupation, they stripped him of the very few things that in his change of dress he had retained. One carried off his handkerchief, a second his neckcloth, and a third, luckier than either, possessed himself of a pair of cornelian shirt-buttons, given to Paul as a *gage d'amour* by a young lady who sold oranges near the Tower. Happily, before this initiatory process, technically termed "ramping," and exercised upon all new-comers who seem to have a spark of decency in them, had reduced the bones of Paul, who fought tooth and nail in his defence, to the state of magnesia, a man of a grave aspect, who had hitherto plucked his oakum in quiet, suddenly rose, thrust himself between the victim and the assailants, and desired the latter, like one having authority, to leave the lad alone, and go and be d—d.

This proposal to resort to another place for amusement, though uttered in a very grave and tranquil manner, produced that instantaneous effect which admonitions from great rogues generally work upon little. Messieurs the "rampers" ceased from their amusements, and the ringleader of the gang, thumping Paul heartily on the back, declared he was a capital fellow, and it was only a bit of a *spre* like, which he hoped had not given any offence.

Paul, still clenching his fist, was about to answer in no pacific mood, when a turnkey, who did not care in the least how many men he locked up for an offence, but who did not at all like the trouble of looking after any one of his flock to see that the offence was not committed, now suddenly appeared among the set; and, after scolding them for the excessive plague they were to him, carried off two of the poorest of the mob to solitary

confinement. It happened, of course, that *these* two had not taken the smallest share in the disturbance. This scene over, the company returned to picking oakum, — the treadmill, that admirably just invention, by which a strong man suffers no fatigue, and a weak one loses his health for life, not having been then introduced into our excellent establishments for correcting crime. Bitterly, and with many dark and wrathful feelings, in which the sense of injustice at punishment alone bore him up against the humiliations to which he was subjected, — bitterly, and with a swelling heart, in which the thoughts that lead to crime were already forcing their way through a soil suddenly warmed for their growth, did Paul bend over his employment. He felt himself touched on the arm; he turned, and saw that the gentleman who had so kindly delivered him from his tormentors was now sitting next to him. Paul gazed long and earnestly upon his neighbor, struggling with the thought that he had beheld that sagacious countenance in happier times, although now, alas! it was altered, not only by time and vicissitude, but by that air of gravity which the cares of manhood spread gradually over the face of the most thoughtless, — until all doubt melted away, and he exclaimed, —

“Is that you, Mr. Tomlinson? How glad I am to see you here!”

“And I,” returned the quondam murderer for the newspapers, with a nasal twang, “should be very glad to see myself anywhere else!”

Paul made no answer, and Augustus continued.

“‘To a wise man all places are the same,’ so it has been said. I don’t believe it, Paul, — I don’t believe it. But a truce to reflection. I remembered you the moment I saw you, though you are surprisingly grown.

How is my friend MacGrawler? — still hard at work for the 'Asinæum'?"

"I believe so," said Paul, sullenly, and hastening to change the conversation; "but tell me, Mr. Tomlinson, how came you hither? I heard you had gone down to the north of England to fulfil a lucrative employment."

"Possibly, the world always misrepresents the actions of those who are constantly before it!"

"It is very true," said Paul; "and I have said the same thing myself a hundred times in the 'Asinæum'; for we were never too lavish of our truths in that magnificent journal. 'T is astonishing what a way we made three ideas go."

"You remind me of myself and my newspaper labors," rejoined Augustus Tomlinson: "I am not quite sure that *I* had so many as three ideas to spare; for, as you say, it is astonishing how far that number may go, properly managed. It is with writers as with strolling players, — the same three ideas that did for Turks in one scene, do for Highlanders in the next: but you must tell me your history one of these days, and you shall hear mine."

"I should be excessively obliged to you for your confidence," said Paul, "and I doubt not but your life must be excessively entertaining. Mine, as yet, has been but insipid. The lives of literary men are not fraught with adventure; and I question whether every writer in the 'Asinæum' has not led pretty nearly the same existence as that which I have sustained myself."

In conversation of this sort our newly-restored friends passed the remainder of the day, until the hour of half-past four, when the prisoners are to suppose night has begun, and be locked up in their bedrooms. Tomlinson then, who was glad to re-find a person who had

known him in his *beaux jours*, spoke privately to the turnkey; and the result of the conversation was the coupling Paul and Augustus in the same chamber, which was a sort of stone box that generally accommodated three, and was — for we have measured it, as we would have measured the cell of the prisoner of Chillon — just eight feet by six.

We do not intend, reader, to indicate, by broad colors and in long detail, the moral deterioration of our hero; because we have found, by experience, that such pains on our part do little more than make thee blame our stupidity instead of lauding our intention. We shall therefore only work out our moral by subtle hints and brief comments; and we shall now content ourselves with reminding thee that hitherto thou hast seen Paul honest in the teeth of circumstances. Despite the contagion of the "Mug;" despite his associates in Fish Lane; despite his intimacy with Long Ned, — thou hast seen him brave temptation, and look forward to some other career than that of robbery or fraud. Nay, even in his destitution, when driven from the abode of his childhood, thou hast observed how, instead of resorting to some more pleasurable or libertine road of life, he betook himself at once to the dull roof and insipid employments of MacGrawler, and preferred honestly earning his subsistence by the sweat of his brain to recurring to any of the numerous ways of living on others with which his experience among the worst part of society must have teemed, and which, to say the least of them, are more alluring to the young and the adventurous than the barren paths of literary labor. Indeed, to let thee into a secret, it had been Paul's daring ambition to raise himself into a worthy member of the community. His present circumstances, it may hereafter be seen, made

the cause of a great change in his desires; and the conversation he held that night with the ingenious and skillful Augustus, went more towards fitting him for the hero of this work than all the habits of his childhood or the scenes of his earlier youth. Young people are apt, erroneously, to believe that it is a bad thing to be exceedingly wicked. The House of Correction is so called because it is a place where so ridiculous a notion is invariably corrected.

The next day Paul was surprised by a visit from Mrs. Lobkins, who had heard of his situation and its causes from the friendly Dummie, and who had managed to obtain from Justice Burnflat an order of admission. They met, Pyramus and Thisbe like, with a wall, or rather an iron gate, between them; and Mrs. Lobkins, after an ejaculation of despair at the obstacle, burst weeping into the pathetic reproach, —

“Oh, Paul, thou hast brought thy pigs to a fine market!”

“’T is a market proper for pigs, dear dame,” said Paul, who, though with a tear in his eye, did not refuse a joke as bitter as it was inelegant; “for, of all others, it is the spot where a man learns to take care of his bacon.”

“Hold your tongue!” cried the dame, angrily. “What business has you to gabble on so while you are in limbo?”

“Ah, dear dame,” said Paul, “we can’t help these rubs and stumbles on our road to preferment!”

“Road to the scragging-post!” cried the dame. “I tells you, child, you ’ll live to be hanged in spite of all my care and ’tention to you, though I hedicated you as a scholard, and always hoped as how you would grow up to be an honor to your —”

"King and country," interrupted Paul. "We always say honor to king and country, which means getting rich and paying taxes. 'The more taxes a man pays, the greater honor he is to both,' as Augustus says. Well, dear dame, all in good time."

"What! you is merry, is you? Why does not you weep? Your heart is as hard as a brickbat. It looks quite unnatural and hyena-like to be so *devil-mecarish*!" So saying, the good dame's tears gushed forth with the bitterness of a despairing Parisina.

"Nay, nay," said Paul, who, though he suffered far more intensely, bore the suffering far more easily than his patroness, "we cannot mend the matter by crying. Suppose you see what can be done for me. I daresay you may manage to soften the justice's sentence by a little 'oil of palms;' and if you can get me out before I am quite corrupted,—a day or two longer in this infernal place will do the business,—I promise you that I will not only live honestly myself, but with people who live in the same manner."

"Buss me, Paul," said the tender Mrs. Lobkins,—
"buss me, — oh! but I forgits the gate; I'll see what can be done. And here, my lad, here's summat for you in the meanwhile, — a drop o' the cretur, to preach comfort to your poor stomach. Hush! smuggle it through or they'll see you."

Here the dame endeavored to push a stone bottle through the bars of the gate; but, alas! though the neck passed through, the body refused, and the dame was forced to retract the "cretur." Upon this the kind-hearted woman renewed her sobbings; and so absorbed was she in her grief that, seemingly quite forgetting for what purpose she had brought the bottle, she applied it to her own mouth, and consoled herself with

that *elixir vitæ* which she had originally designed for Paul.

This somewhat restored her; and after a most affecting scene, the dame reeled off with the vacillating steps natural to woe, promising as she went, that if love or money could shorten Paul's confinement, neither should be wanting. We are rather at a loss to conjecture the exact influence which the former of these arguments, urged by the lovely Margaret, might have had upon Justice Burnflat.

When the good dame had departed, Paul hastened to repick his oakum and rejoin his friend. He found the worthy Augustus privately selling little elegant luxuries, such as tobacco, gin, and rations of daintier viands than the prison allowed; for Augustus, having more money than the rest of his companions, managed, through the friendship of the turnkey, to purchase secretly, and to resell at about four hundred per cent, such comforts as the prisoners especially coveted.¹

"A proof," said Augustus, dryly, to Paul, "that, by prudence and exertion, even in those places where a man cannot turn himself, he may manage to turn a penny!"

¹ A very common practice at the Bridewells. The governor at the Coldbath-Fields, apparently a very intelligent and active man, every way fitted for a most arduous undertaking, informed us, in the only conversation we have had the honor to hold with him, that he thought he had nearly or quite destroyed in his jurisdiction this illegal method of commerce.

CHAPTER IX.

"Relate at large, my godlike guest," she said,
"The *Grecian stratagems*, — *the town betrayed!*"
DRYDEN'S *Virgil*, b. ii. "*Æn.*"

Descending thence, they 'scaped! — *Ibid.*

A GREAT improvement had taken place in the character of Augustus Tomlinson since Paul had last encountered that illustrious man. *Then*, Augustus had affected the man of pleasure, the learned loungeur about town, the all-accomplished Pericles of the papers, — now quoting Horace, now flanking a fly from the leader of Lord Dunshunner: in a word, a sort of human half-way-house between Lord Dudley and the Marquess of Worcester. *Now*, a graver, yet not a less supercilious air had settled upon his features; the pretence of fashion had given way to the pretence of wisdom; and from the man of pleasure Augustus Tomlinson had grown to the philosopher. With this elevation alone, too, he was not content: he united the philosopher with the politician; and the ingenious rascal was pleased especially to pique himself upon being "a moderate Whig!" "Paul," he was wont to observe, "believe me, moderate Whiggism is a most excellent creed. It adapts itself to every possible change, — to every conceivable variety of circumstance. It is the only politics for us who are the aristocrats of that free body who rebel against tyrannical laws; for, hang it, I am none of your democrats! Let there be dungeons and turnkeys for the low rascals who whip clothes from the hedge where they hang to dry, or steal down an area in quest of a silver spoon; but houses

of correction are not made for men who have received an enlightened education; who abhor your petty thefts as much as a justice of peace can do; who ought never to be termed dishonest in their dealings, but, if they are found out, '*unlucky in their speculations!*'¹ A pretty thing, indeed, that there should be distinctions of rank amongst other members of the community, and none among us! Where's your boasted British constitution, I should like to know,—where are your privileges of aristocracy, if I, who am a gentleman born, know Latin, and have lived in the best society, should be thrust into this abominable place with a dirty fellow who was born in a cellar, and could never earn more at a time than would purchase a sausage? No, no! none of your levelling principles for me! I am liberal, Paul, and love liberty; but, thank Heaven, I despise your democracies!"

Thus, half in earnest, half veiling a natural turn to sarcasm, would this moderate Whig run on for the hour together, during those long nights, commencing at half-past four, in which he and Paul bore each other company.

One evening, when Tomlinson was so bitterly disposed to be prolix that Paul felt himself somewhat wearied by his eloquence, our hero, desirous of a change in the conversation, reminded Augustus of his promise to communicate his history; and the philosophical Whig, nothing loth to speak of himself, cleared his throat and began.

HISTORY OF AUGUSTUS TOMLINSON.

"Never mind who was my father, nor what was my native place! My first ancestor was Tommy Linn (his

¹ A phrase applied to a noted defaulter of the public money.

heir became Tom Linn's son): you have heard the ballad made in his praise:—

“ ‘Tommy Linn is a Scotchman born,
His head is bald and his beard is shorn ;
He had a cap made of a hare-skin, —
An elder man is Tommy Linn ! ’ ”¹

“ There was a sort of prophecy respecting my ancestor's descendants darkly insinuated in the concluding stanza of this ballad:—

“ ‘Tommy Linn and his wife and his wife's mother,
They all fell into the fire together ;
They that lay undermost got a hot skin, —
“ We are not enough ! ” said Tommy Linn. ’ ”²

“ You see the prophecy; it is applicable both to gentlemen rogues and to moderate Whigs; for both are *undermost* in the world, and both are perpetually bawling out, ‘ *We are not enough !* ’

“ I shall begin my own history by saying, I went to a north-country school, where I was noted for my aptness in learning, and my skill at ‘ prisoner's base, ’ — upon my word, I purposed no pun! I was intended for the church. Wishing, betimes, to instruct myself in its ceremonies, I persuaded my schoolmaster's maid-servant to assist me towards promoting a christening. My father did not like this premature love for the sacred rites. He took me home, and, wishing to give my clerical ardor a different turn, prepared me for *writing* sermons, by *reading* me a dozen a day. I grew tired of this, strange as it may seem to you. ‘ Father, ’ said I, one morning, ‘ it is no use talking, I will not go into the church, — that's positive. Give me your

¹ See Ritson's “ North-Country Chorister. ”

² Ibid.

blessing and a hundred pounds, and I'll go up to London, and get a *living* instead of a curacy.' My father stormed, but I got the better at last. I talked of becoming a private tutor; swore I had heard nothing was so easy, — the only things wanted were pupils, and the only way to get them was to go to London, and let my learning be known. My poor father! — well, he's gone, and I am glad of it now [the speaker's voice faltered], — I got the better, I say, and I came to town, where I had a relation, a bookseller. Through his interest I wrote a book of 'Travels in Æthiopia,' for an earl's son who wanted to become a lion; and a 'Treatise on the Greek Particle,' dedicated to the prime minister, for a dean who wanted to become a bishop, — Greek being, next to interest, the best road to the mitre. These two achievements were liberally paid; so I took a lodging in a first floor, and resolved to make a bold stroke for a wife. What do you think I did? — nay, never guess, it would be hopeless. First, I went to the best tailor, and had my clothes sewn on my back; secondly, I got the peerage and its genealogies by heart; thirdly, I marched one night, with the coolest deliberation possible, into the house of a duchess who was giving an immense rout! The newspapers had inspired me with this idea. I had read of the vast crowds which a lady 'at home' sought to win to her house. I had read of staircases impassable, and ladies carried out in a fit; and common sense told me how impossible it was that the fair receiver should be acquainted with the legality of every importation. I therefore resolved to try my chance, and — entered the body of Augustus Tomlinson as a piece of stolen goods. Faith! the first night I was shy, — I stuck to the staircase, and ogled an old maid of quality, whom I had heard announced as Lady Mar-

garet Sinclair. Doubtless she had never been ogled before; and she was evidently enraptured with my glances. The next night I read of a ball at the Countess of —. My heart beat as if I were going to be whipped; but I plucked up courage, and repaired to her ladyship's. There I again beheld the divine Lady Margaret; and observing that she turned yellow, by way of a blush, when she saw me, I profited by the port I had drunk as an encouragement to my *entrée*, and lounging up in the most modish way possible, I reminded her ladyship of an introduction with which I *said* I had once been honored at the Duke of Dashwell's, and requested her hand for the next cotillon. Oh, Paul, fancy my triumph! — the old damsel said, with a sigh, 'she remembered me very well.' Ha! ha! ha! and I carried her off to the cotillon like another Theseus bearing away a second Ariadne. Not to be prolix on this part of my life, I went night after night to balls and routs, for admission to which half the fine gentlemen in London would have given their ears. And I improved my time so well with Lady Margaret, who was her own mistress, and had five thousand pounds, — a devilish bad portion for some, but not to be laughed at by me, — that I began to think *when* the happy day should be fixed. Meanwhile, as Lady Margaret introduced me to some of her friends, and my lodgings were in a good situation, I had been honored with some real invitations. The only two questions I ever was asked were (carelessly), 'Was I the only son?' and on my veritable answer, 'Yes!' 'What [this was more warmly put], — what was my county?' Luckily, my county was a wide one, — Yorkshire; and any of its inhabitants whom the fair interrogators might have questioned about me could only have answered, 'I was not in their part of it.'

"Well, Paul, I grew so bold by success, that the devil one day put into my head to go to a great dinner-party at the Duke of Dashwell's. I went, dined, — nothing happened: I came away, and the next morning I read in the papers, —

"'Mysterious affair — person lately going about — first houses — most fashionable parties — nobody knows — Duke of Dashwell's yesterday. Duke not like to make disturbance — as — royalty present.'"¹

"The journal dropped from my hands. At that moment the girl of the house gave me a note from Lady Margaret; alluded to the paragraph; wondered who was 'The Stranger;' hoped to see me that night at Lord A——'s, to whose party I said I had been asked; speak then more fully on those matters I had touched on! — in short, dear Paul, a tender epistle! All great men are fatalists; I am one now: fate made me a madman; in the very face of this ominous paragraph I mustered up courage, and went that night to Lord A——'s. The fact is, my affairs were in confusion, — I was greatly in debt; I knew it was necessary to finish my conquest over Lady Margaret as soon as possible; and Lord A——'s seemed the best place for the purpose. Nay, I thought delay so dangerous, after the cursed paragraph, that a day might unmask me, and it would be better, therefore, not to lose an hour in finishing the play of 'The Stranger,' with the farce of the 'Honeymoon.' Behold me, then, at Lord A——'s, leading off Lady Margaret to the dance. Behold me whispering the sweetest of things in her ear. Imagine her approving my suit, and gently chiding me for talking of Gretna Green. Conceive all this, my dear fellow, and just at the height of my triumph, dilate the eyes of your im-

¹ Fact.

agination, and behold the stately form of Lord A——, my noble host, marching up to me, while a voice that, though low and quiet as an evening breeze, made my heart sink into my shoes, said, ‘I believe, sir, you have received no invitation from Lady A——?’

“Not a word could I utter, Paul, — not a word. Had it been the highroad instead of a ballroom, I could have talked loudly enough, but I was under a spell. ‘Ehem!’ I faltered at last: ‘E-h-e-m! Some mis-take, I — I.’ There I stopped. ‘Sir,’ said the earl, regarding me with a grave sternness, ‘you had better withdraw!’

“‘Bless me! what’s all this?’ cried Lady Margaret, dropping my palsied arm, and gazing on me as if she expected me to talk like a hero.

“‘Oh,’ said I, ‘eh-e-m, eh-e-m, I will explain to-morrow, ehem, e-h-e-m.’ I made to the door; all the eyes in the room seemed turned into burning-glasses, and blistered the very skin on my face. I heard a gentle shriek as I left the apartment: Lady Margaret fainting, I suppose! There ended my courtship, and my adventures in ‘the best society.’ I fell melancholy at the ill-success of my scheme. You must allow it was a magnificent project. What moral courage! I admire myself when I think of it. Without an introduction, without knowing a soul, to become, all by my own resolution, free of the finest houses in London, dancing with earls’ daughters, and all but carrying off an earl’s daughter myself as my wife. If I had, the friends *must* have done something for me; and Lady Margaret Tomlinson might perhaps have introduced the youthful genius of her Augustus to Parliament or the ministry. Oh, what a fall was there! yet, faith, ha! ha! ha! I could not help laughing, despite of my chagrin, when I remembered that for three months I had imposed on these

'delicate exclusives,' and been literally invited by many of them, who would not have asked the younger sons of their own cousins; merely because I lived in a good street, avowed myself an only child, and talked of my property in Yorkshire! Ha! ha! how bitter the mercenary dupes must have felt when the discovery was made! What a pill for the good matrons who had coupled my image with that of some filial Mary or Jane, — ha! ha! ha! the triumph was almost worth the mortification. However, as I said before, I fell melancholy on it, especially as my duns became menacing. So I went to consult with my cousin the bookseller; he recommended me to compose for the journals, and obtained me an offer. I went to work very patiently for a short time, and contracted some agreeable friendships with gentlemen whom I met at an ordinary in St. James's. Still, my duns, though I paid them by dribblets, were the plague of my life: I confessed as much to one of my new friends. 'Come to Bath with me,' quoth he, 'for a week, and you shall return as rich as a Jew.' I accepted the offer, and went to Bath in my friend's chariot. He took the name of Lord Dunshunner, an Irish peer who had never been out of Tipperary, and was not therefore likely to be known at Bath. He took also a house for a year, filled it with wines, books, and a sideboard of plate: as he talked vaguely of setting up (at the next Parliament) for the town, he bought these goods of the townspeople, in order to encourage their trade. I managed secretly to transport them to London and sell them; and as we disposed of them fifty per cent under cost price, our customers, the pawnbrokers, were not very inquisitive. We lived a jolly life at Bath for a couple of months, and departed one night, leaving our house-keeper to answer all interrogatories. We had taken the

precaution to wear disguises, stuffed ourselves out, and changed the hues of our hair: my noble friend was an adept in these transformations; and though the police did not sleep on the business, they never stumbled on us. I am especially glad we were not discovered; for I liked Bath excessively, and I intend to return there some of these days and retire from the world, — on an heiress!

“Well, Paul, shortly after this adventure, I made your acquaintance. I continued ostensibly my literary profession, but only as a mask for the labors I did not profess. A circumstance obliged me to leave London rather precipitately. Lord Dunshunner joined me in Edinburgh. D— it! instead of doing anything *there*, we were done! The veriest urchin that ever crept through the High Street is more than a match for the most scientific of Englishmen. With us it is art; with the Scotch it is nature. They pick your pockets without using their fingers for it; and they prevent reprisal by having nothing for you to pick.

“We left Edinburgh with very long faces, and at Carlisle we found it necessary to separate. For my part, I went as a valet to a nobleman who had just lost his last servant at Carlisle by a fever: my friend gave me the best of characters! My new master was a very clever man. He astonished people at dinner by the impromptus he prepared at breakfast: in a word, he was a wit. He soon saw, for he was learned himself, that I had received a classical education, and he employed me in the confidential capacity of finding quotations for him. I classed these alphabetically and under three heads: ‘Parliamentary, Literary, Dining-out.’ These were again subdivided into ‘Fine,’ ‘Learned,’ and ‘Jocular;’ so that my master knew at once where to

refer for genius, wisdom, and wit. He was delighted with my management of his intellects. In compliment to him, I paid more attention to politics than I had done before, for he was a 'great Whig,' and uncommonly liberal in everything but money! Hence, Paul, the origin of my political principles: and I thank Heaven there is not now a rogue in England who is a better, that is to say, more of a moderate Whig than your humble servant! I continued with him nearly a year. He discharged me for a fault worthy of my genius, — other servants may lose the watch or the coat of their master; I went at nobler game, and lost him — *his private character!*"

"How do you mean?"

"Why, I was enamored of a lady who would not have looked at me as Mr. Tomlinson; so I took my master's clothes, and occasionally his carriage, and made love to my nymph as Lord —. Her vanity made her indiscreet. The Tory papers got hold of it; and my master, in a change of ministers, was declared by George III. to be 'too gay for a Chancellor of the Exchequer.' An old gentleman, who had had fifteen children by a wife like a Gorgon, was chosen instead of my master: and, although the new minister was a fool in his public capacity, the moral public were perfectly content with him, because of his *private virtues!*

"My master was furious, made the strictest inquiry, *found* me out, and *turned* me out too!

"A Whig not in place has an excuse for disliking the constitution. My distress almost made me a republican; but, true to my creed, I must confess that I would only have levelled upwards. I especially disaffected the inequality of riches; I looked moodily on every carriage that passed; I even frowned like a second Catiline at

the steam of a gentleman's kitchen! My last situation had not been lucrative; I had neglected my perquisites in my ardor for politics. My master, too, refused to give me a character; who would take me without one?

"I was asking myself this melancholy question one morning, when I suddenly encountered one of the fine friends I had picked up at my old haunt, the ordinary, in St. James's. His name was Pepper."

"Pepper!" cried Paul.

Without heeding the exclamation, Tomlinson continued, —

"We went to a tavern, and drank a bottle together. Wine made me communicative; it also opened my comrade's heart. He asked me to take a ride with him that night towards Hounslow; I did so, and found a purse."

"How fortunate! Where?"

"In a gentleman's pocket. I was so pleased with my luck, that I went the same road twice a week, in order to see if I could pick up any *more* purses. Fate favored me, and I lived for a long time the life of the blessed. Oh, Paul, you know not, — you know not what a glorious life is that of a highwayman; but you shall taste it one of these days, — you shall, on my honor.

"I now lived with a club of honest fellows: we called ourselves 'The Exclusives;' for we were mighty reserved in our associates, and only those who did business on a grand scale were admitted into our set. For my part, with all my love for my profession, I liked ingenuity still better than force, and preferred what the vulgar call swindling, even to the highroad. On an expedition of this sort, I rode once into a country town, and saw a crowd assembled in one corner; I joined it, and — guess my feelings! — beheld my poor friend, Viscount Dunshunner, just about to be hanged. I rode

off as fast as I could, — I thought I saw Jack Ketch at my heels. My horse threw me at a hedge, and I broke my collar-bone. In the confinement that ensued, gloomy ideas floated before me. I did not like to be hanged! so I reasoned against my errors, and repented. I recovered slowly, returned to town, and repaired to my cousin, the bookseller. To say truth, I had played him a little trick; collected some debts of his by a mistake, — very natural in the confusion incident on my distresses. However, he was extremely unkind about it; and the mistake, natural as it was, had cost me his acquaintance.

“I went now to him with the penitential aspect of the prodigal son, and, faith, he would not have made a bad representation of the fatted calf about to be killed on my return, — so corpulent looked he, and so dejected! ‘Graceless reprobate!’ he began, ‘your poor father is dead!’ I was exceedingly shocked; but — never fear, Paul, I am not about to be pathetic. My father had divided his fortune among all his children: my share was £500. The possession of this sum made my penitence seem much more sincere in the eyes of my good cousin; and, after a very pathetic scene, he took me once more into favor. I now consulted with him as to the best method of laying out my capital and recovering my character. We could not devise any scheme at the first conference; but the second time I saw him, my cousin said, with a cheerful countenance, ‘Cheer up, Augustus, I have got thee a situation. Mr. Asgrave, the banker, will take thee as a clerk. He is a most worthy man; and, having a vast deal of learning, he will respect thee for thy acquirements.’ The same day I was introduced to Mr. Asgrave, who was a little man with a fine, bald, benevolent head; and, after a long conversation, which he was pleased to hold with me,

I became one of his quill-drivers. I don't know how it was, but by little and little I rose in my master's good graces: I propitiated him, I fancy, by disposing of my £500 according to his advice; he laid it out for me, on what he said was famous security, — on a landed estate. Mr. Asgrave was of social habits, — he had a capital house and excellent wines. As he was not very particular in his company, nor ambitious of visiting the great, he often suffered me to make one of his table, and was pleased to hold long arguments with me about the ancients. I soon found out that my master was a great moral philosopher; and, being myself in weak health, sated with the ordinary pursuits of the world, in which my experience had forestalled my years, and naturally of a contemplative temperament, I turned my attention to the moral studies which so fascinated my employer. I read through nine shelves full of metaphysicians, and knew exactly the points in which those illustrious thinkers quarrelled with each other to the great advance of the science. My master and I used to hold many a long discussion about the nature of good and evil; and, as by help of his benevolent forehead, and a clear, dogged voice, he always seemed to our audience to be the wiser and better man of the two, he was very well pleased with our disputes. This gentleman had an only daughter, an awful shrew, with a face like a hatchet; but philosophers overcome personal defects; and, thinking only of the good her wealth might enable me to do to my fellow-creatures, I secretly made love to her. You will say that was playing my master but a scurvy trick in return for his kindness: not at all, my master himself had convinced me that there was no such virtue as gratitude. It was an error of vulgar moralists. I yielded to his arguments, and at length privately espoused his

daughter. The day after this took place, he summoned me to his study. 'So, Augustus,' said he, very mildly, 'you have married my daughter: nay, never look confused; I saw a long time ago that you were resolved to do so, and I was very glad of it.'

"I attempted to falter out something like thanks. 'Never interrupt me!' said he. 'I had two reasons for being glad: 1st, Because my daughter was the plague of my life, and I wanted some one to take her off my hands; 2d, Because I required your assistance on a particular point, and I could not venture to ask it of any one but my son-in-law. In fine, I wish to take you into partnership!'

"'Partnership!' cried I, falling on my knees. 'Noble, generous man!'

"'Stay a bit,' continued my father-in-law. 'What funds do you think requisite for carrying on a bank? You look puzzled! Not a shilling! You will put in just as much as I do. You will put in rather more; for you once put in £500, which has been spent long ago. I don't put in a shilling of my own. I live on my clients, and I very willingly offer you half of them!'

"Imagine, dear Paul, my astonishment, my dismay! I saw myself married to a hideous shrew, — son-in-law to a penniless scoundrel, and cheated out of my whole fortune! Compare this view of the question with that which had blazed on me when I contemplated being son-in-law to the rich Mr. Asgrave. I stormed at first. Mr. Asgrave took up 'Bacon on the Advancement of Learning,' and made no reply till I was cooled by explosion. You will perceive that, when passion subsided, I necessarily saw that nothing was left for me but adopting my father-in-law's proposal. Thus, by the fatality which attended me, at the very time I meant to reform,

I was forced into scoundrelism, and I was driven into defrauding a vast number of persons by the accident of being son-in-law to a great moralist. As Mr. Asgrave was an indolent man, who passed his mornings in speculations on virtue, I was made the active partner. I spent the day at the counting-house; and, when I came home for recreation, my wife scratched my eyes out."

"But were you never recognized as 'the stranger,' or 'the adventurer,' in your new capacity?"

"No; for, of course, I assumed, in all my changes, both aliases and disguises. And, to tell you the truth, my marriage so altered me, that, what with a snuff-colored coat and a brown scratch wig, with a pen in my right ear, I looked the very picture of staid respectability. My face grew an inch longer every day. Nothing is so respectable as a long face; and a subdued expression of countenance is the surest sign of commercial prosperity. Well, we went on splendidly enough for about a year. Meanwhile I was wonderfully improved in philosophy. You have no idea how a scolding wife sublimates and rarefies one's intellect. Thunder clears the air, you know! At length, unhappily for my fame (for I contemplated a magnificent moral history of man, which, had she lived a year longer, I should have completed), my wife died in childbed. My father-in-law and I were talking over the event, and finding fault with civilization, by the enervating habits of which women die of their children, instead of bringing them forth without being even conscious of the circumstance, — when a bit of paper, sealed awry, was given to my partner: he looked over it, finished the discussion, and then told me our bank had stopped payment. 'Now, Augustus,' said he, lighting his pipe with the bit of paper, 'you see the good of having nothing to lose?'

"We did not pay quite sixpence in the pound; but my partner was thought so unfortunate, that the British public raised a subscription for him, and he retired on an annuity, greatly respected and very much compassionated. As I had not been so well known as a moralist, and had not the prepossessing advantage of a bald, benevolent head, nothing was done for *me*, and I was turned once more on the wide world, to moralize on the vicissitudes of fortune. My cousin the bookseller was no more, and his son cut me. I took a garret in Warwick Court, and with a few books, my only consolation, I endeavored to nerve my mind to the future. It was at this time, Paul, that my studies really availed me. I meditated much, and I became a true philosopher, — namely, a practical one. My actions were henceforth regulated by principle; and, at some time or other, I will convince you that the road of true morals never avoids the pockets of your neighbor. So soon as my mind had made the grand discovery which Mr. Asgrave had made before me, that one should live according to a system, — for if you do wrong, it is then your system that errs, not you, — I took to the road, without any of those stings of conscience which had hitherto annoyed me in such adventures. I formed one of a capital knot of 'Free Agents,' whom I will introduce to you some day or other, and I soon rose to distinction among them. But about six weeks ago, not less than formerly preferring byways to highways, I attempted to possess myself of a carriage, and sell it at discount. I was acquitted on the felony, but sent hither by Justice Burnflat on the misdemeanor. Thus far, my young friend, hath as yet proceeded the life of Augustus Tomlinson."

The history of this gentleman made a deep impression on Paul. The impression was strengthened by the con-

versations subsequently holden with Augustus. That worthy was a dangerous and subtle persuader. He had really read a good deal of history, and something of morals; and he had an ingenious way of defending his rascally practices by syllogisms from the latter, and examples from the former. These theories he clenched, as it were, by a reference to the existing politics of the day. Cheaters of the public on false pretences, he was pleased to term "*moderate Whigs*;" bullying demanders of your purse were "*high Tories*;" and thieving in gangs was "*the effect of the spirit of party.*" There was this difference between Augustus Tomlinson and Long Ned, — Ned was the acting knave, Augustus the reasoning one; and we may see, therefore, by a little reflection, that Tomlinson was a far more perilous companion than Pepper, for showy theories are always more seductive to the young and clever than suasive examples, and the vanity of the youthful makes them better pleased by being convinced of a thing, than by being enticed to it.

A day or two after the narrative of Mr. Tomlinson, Paul was again visited by Mrs. Lobkins; for the regulations against frequent visitors were not then so strictly enforced as we understand them to be now; and the good dame came to deplore the ill success of her interview with Justice Burnflat.

We spare the tender-hearted reader a detail of the affecting interview that ensued. Indeed, it was but a repetition of the one we have before narrated. We shall only say, as a proof of Paul's tenderness of heart, that when he took leave of the good matron, and bade "God bless her," his voice faltered, and the tears stood in his eyes, — just as they were wont to do in the eyes of George III., when that excellent monarch was *pleased graciously* to encore "God save the King!"

"I'll be hanged," soliloquized our hero, as he slowly bent his course towards the subtle Augustus, — "I'll be hanged (humph! the denunciation is prophetic) if I don't feel as grateful to the old lady for her care of me as if she had never ill-used me. As for my parents, I believe I have little to be grateful for, or proud of, in that quarter. My poor mother, by all accounts, seems scarcely to have had even the brute virtue of maternal tenderness; and in all human likelihood I shall never know whether I had one father or fifty. But what matters it? I rather like the better to be independent; and, after all, what do nine-tenths of us ever get from our parents but an ugly name, and advice which, if we follow, we are wretched,—and if we neglect, we are disinherited?"

Comforting himself with these thoughts, which perhaps took their philosophical complexion from the conversations he had lately held with Augustus, and which broke off into the muttered air of

"Why should we quarrel for riches?"

Paul repaired to his customary avocations.

In the third week of our hero's captivity, Tomlinson communicated to him a plan of escape that had occurred to his sagacious brain. In the yard appropriated to the amusements of the gentlemen "misdemeaning," there was a water-pipe that, skirting the wall, passed over a door, through which, every morning, the pious captives passed, in their way to the chapel. By this, Tomlinson proposed to escape; for to the pipe, which reached from the door to the wall in a slanting and easy direction, there was a sort of skirting-board; and a dexterous and nimble man might readily, by the help of this board, convey himself along the pipe, until the progress of that

useful conductor (which was happily very brief) was stopped by the summit of the wall, where it found a sequel in another pipe, that descended to the ground on the opposite side of the wall. Now, on this opposite side was the garden of the prison; in this garden was a watchman; and this watchman was the hobgoblin of Tomlinson's scheme: "For, suppose us safe in the garden," said he, "what shall we do with this confounded fellow?"

"But that is not all," added Paul: "for even were there no watchman, there is a terrible wall, which I noted especially last week, when we were set to work in the garden, and which has no pipe, save a perpendicular one, that a man must have the legs of a fly to be able to climb!"

"Nonsense!" returned Tomlinson: "I will show you how to climb the stubbornest wall in Christendom, if one has but the coast clear; it is the watchman, — the watchman, we must —"

"What?" asked Paul, observing his comrade did not conclude the sentence.

It was some time before the sage Augustus replied; he then said, in a musing tone, —

"I have been thinking, Paul, whether it would be consistent with virtue, and that strict code of morals by which all my actions are regulated, to — slay the watchman!"

"Good Heavens!" cried Paul, horror-stricken.

"And I have decided," continued Augustus, solemnly, without regard to the exclamation, "that the action would be perfectly justifiable!"

"Villain!" exclaimed Paul, recoiling to the other end of the stone box (for it was night) in which they were cooped.

"But," pursued Augustus, who seemed soliloquizing, and whose voice, sounding calm and thoughtful, like Young's in the famous monologue in "Hamlet," denoted that he heeded not the uncourteous interruption,—"but opinion does not always influence conduct; and, although it may be virtuous to murder the watchman, I have not the heart to do it. I trust in my future history I shall not, by discerning moralists, be too severely censured for a weakness for which my physical temperament is alone to blame!"

Despite the turn of the soliloquy, it was a long time before Paul could be reconciled to further conversation with Augustus; and it was only from the belief that the moralist had leaned to the jesting vein that he at length resumed the consultation.

The conspirators did not, however, bring their scheme that night to any ultimate decision. The next day, Augustus, Paul, and some others of the company, were set to work in the garden; and Paul then observed that his friend, wheeling a barrow close by the spot where the watchman stood, overturned its contents. The watchman was good-natured enough to assist him in refilling the barrow; and Tomlinson profited so well by the occasion that, that night, he informed Paul that they would have nothing to dread from the watchman's vigilance. "He has promised," said Augustus, "for certain *con-si-de-ra-ti-ons*, to allow me to knock him down: he has also promised to be so much hurt as not to be able to move until we are over the wall. Our main difficulty now, then, is the first step,—namely, to climb the pipe unperceived!"

"As to that," said Paul, who developed, through the whole of the scheme, organs of sagacity, boldness, and invention, which charmed his friend, and certainly

promised well for his future career, — “as to that, I think we may manage the first ascent with less danger than you imagine: the mornings, of late, have been very foggy; they are almost dark at the hour we go to chapel. Let you and I close the file: the pipe passes just above the door; our hands, as we have tried, can reach it; and a spring of no great agility will enable us to raise ourselves up to a footing on the pipe and the skirting-board. The climbing, then, is easy; and, what with the dense fog, and our own quickness, I think we shall have little difficulty in gaining the garden. The only precautions we need use are, to wait for a very dark morning, and to be sure that we are the last of the file, so that no one behind may give the alarm — ”

“Or attempt to follow our example, and spoil the pie by a superfluous plum!” added Augustus. “You counsel admirably, and one of these days, if you are not hung in the meanwhile, will, I venture to augur, be a great logician.”

The next morning was clear and frosty; but the day after was, to use Tomlinson’s simile, “as dark as if all the negroes of Africa had been stewed down into air.” “You might have cut the fog with a knife,” as the proverb says. Paul and Augustus could not even see how significantly each looked at the other.

It was a remarkable trait of the daring temperament of the former, that, young as he was, it was fixed that he should lead the attempt. At the hour, then, for chapel, the prisoners passed as usual through the door. When it came to Paul’s turn, he drew himself by his hands to the pipe, and then creeping along its sinuous course, gained the wall before he had even fetched his breath. Rather more clumsily, Augustus followed his friend’s example: once his foot slipped, and he was all but

over. He extended his hands involuntarily, and caught Paul by the leg. Happily our hero had then gained the wall to which he was clinging, and for once in a way, one rogue raised himself without throwing over another. Behold Tomlinson and Paul now seated for an instant on the wall to recover breath! the latter then — the descent to the ground was not very great — letting his body down by his hands, dropped into the garden.

"Hurt?" asked the prudent Augustus in a hoarse whisper before he descended from his "bad eminence," being even willing

"To bear those ills he had,
Than fly to others that he knew not of,"

without taking every previous precaution in his power.

"No!" was the answer, in the same voice, and Augustus dropped.

So soon as this latter worthy had recovered the shock of his fall, he lost not a moment in running to the other end of the garden: Paul followed. By the way Tomlinson stopped at a heap of rubbish, and kicked up an immense stone. When they came to the part of the wall they had agreed to scale, they found the watchman, — about whom they needed not, by the by, to have concerned themselves; for had it not been arranged that he was to have met them, the deep fog would have effectually prevented him from seeing them: this faithful guardian Augustus knocked down, not with the stone, but with ten guineas; he then drew forth from his dress a thickish cord which he had procured, some days before, from the turnkey, and fastening the stone firmly to one end, threw that end over the wall. Now the wall had (as walls of great strength mostly have) an overhanging sort of battlement on either side, and the stone,

when flung over and drawn to the tether of the cord to which it was attached, necessarily hitched against this projection; and thus the cord was, as it were, fastened to the wall, and Tomlinson was enabled by it to draw himself up to the top of the barrier. He performed this feat with gymnastic address, like one who had often practised it; albeit, the discreet adventurer had not mentioned in his narrative to Paul any previous occasion for the practice. As soon as he had gained the top of the wall, he threw down the cord to his companion, and, in consideration of Paul's inexperience in that manner of climbing, gave the fastening of the rope an additional security by holding it himself. With slowness and labor Paul hoisted himself up; and then, by transferring the stone to the other side of the wall, where it made, of course, a similar hitch, our two adventurers were enabled successively to slide down, and consummate their escape from the House of Correction.

"Follow me now!" said Augustus, as he took to his heels; and Paul pursued him through a labyrinth of alleys and lanes, through which he shot and dodged with a variable and shifting celerity that, had not Paul kept close upon him, would very soon (combined with the fog) have snatched him from the eyes of his young ally. Happily the immaturity of the morning, the obscurity of the streets passed through, and above all, the extreme darkness of the atmosphere, prevented that detection and arrest which their prisoner's garb would otherwise have insured them. At length they found themselves in the fields; and skulking along hedges, and diligently avoiding the highroad, they continued to fly onward, until they had advanced several miles into "the bowels of the land." At that time "the bowels" of Augustus Tomlinson began to remind him of their

demands; and he accordingly suggested the *desirability* of their seizing the first peasant they encountered, and causing him to exchange clothes with one of the fugitives, who would thus be enabled to enter a public-house and provide for their mutual necessities. Paul agreed to this proposition, and, accordingly, they watched their opportunity and *caught* a ploughman. Augustus stripped him of his frock, hat, and worsted stockings; and Paul, hardened by necessity and companionship, helped to tie the poor ploughman to a tree. They then continued their progress for about an hour, and as the shades of evening fell around them, they discovered a public-house. Augustus entered, and returned in a few minutes laden with bread and cheese, and a bottle of beer. Prison fare cures a man of daintiness, and the two fugitives dined on these homely viands with considerable complacency. They then resumed their journey, and at length, wearied with exertion, they arrived at a lonely haystack, where they resolved to repose for an hour or two.

CHAPTER X.

Unlike the ribald, whose licentious jest
Pollutes his banquet, and insults his guest;
From wealth and grandeur easy to descend,
Thou joy'st to lose the master in the friend:
We round thy board the cheerful menials see,
Gay with the smile of bland equality;
No social care the gracious lord disdains;
Love prompts to love, and reverence reverence gains.

*Translation of Lucan to Piso, prefixed to the
Twelfth Paper of the "Rambler."*

COXLY shone down the bashful stars upon our adventurers, as, after a short nap behind the haystack, they stretched themselves, and, looking at each other, burst into an involuntary and hilarious laugh at the prosperous termination of their exploit.

Hitherto they had been too occupied, first by their flight, then by hunger, then by fatigue, for self-gratulation; now they rubbed their hands, and joked like runaway schoolboys, at their escape.

By degrees their thoughts turned from the past to the future; and "Tell me, my dear fellow," said Augustus, "what you intend to do. I trust I have long ago convinced you that it is no sin 'to serve our friends' and 'to be true to our party;' and, therefore, I suppose, you will decide upon taking to the road!"

"It is very odd," answered Paul, "that I should have any scruples left after your lectures on the subject; but I own to you frankly that, somehow or other, I have doubts whether thieving be really the honestest profession I could follow."

"Listen to me, Paul," answered Augustus; and his reply is not unworthy of notice. "All crime and all excellence depend upon a good choice of words. I see you look puzzled; I will explain. If you take money from the public, and say you have robbed, you have indubitably committed a great crime; but if you do the same, and say you have *been relieving the necessities of the poor*, you have done an excellent action: if, in afterwards dividing this money with your companions, you say you have been sharing booty, you have committed an offence against the laws of your country; but if you observe that *you have been sharing with your friends the gains of your industry*, you have been performing one of the noblest actions of humanity. To knock a man on the head is neither virtuous nor guilty, but it depends upon the language applied to the action to make it murder or glory.¹ Why not say, then, that you have testified '*the courage of a hero*,' rather than '*the atrocity of a ruffian*'? This is perfectly clear, is it not?"

"It seems so," answered Paul.

"It is so self-evident that it is the way all governments are carried on. Wherefore, my good Paul, we only do what all other legislators do. We are never rogues so long as we call ourselves honest fellows; and we never commit a crime so long as we can term it a virtue! What say you now?"

¹ We observe in a paragraph from an American paper, copied without comment into the "Morning Chronicle," a singular proof of the truth of Tomlinson's philosophy. "Mr. Rowland Stephenson [so runs the extract], *the celebrated* English banker, has just purchased a considerable tract of land," etc. Most philosophical of paragraphists! "*Celebrated English banker!*"—that sentence is a better illustration of verbal fallacies than all Bentham's treatises put together. "*Celebrated!*" O Mercury, what a dexterous epithet!

Paul smiled, and was silent a few moments before he replied, —

“There is very little doubt but that you are wrong; yet if you are, so are all the rest of the world. It is of no use to be the only white sheep of the flock. Wherefore, my dear Tomlinson, I will in future be an excellent citizen, *relieve the necessities of the poor*, and *share the gains of my industry with my friends*.”

“Bravo!” cried Tomlinson. “And now that that is settled, the sooner you are inaugurated the better. Since the starlight has shone forth, I see that I am in a place I ought to be very well acquainted with; or, if you like to be suspicious, you may believe that I have brought you purposely in this direction. But first let me ask if you feel any great desire to pass the night by this haystack, or whether you would like a song and the punch-bowl almost as much as the open air, with the chance of being eaten up in a pinch of hay by some strolling cow.”

“You may conceive my choice,” answered Paul.

“Well, then, there is an excellent fellow near here, who keeps a public-house, and is a firm ally and generous patron of the lads of the cross. At certain periods they hold weekly meetings at his house: this is one of the nights. What say you, — shall I introduce you to the club?”

“I shall be very glad, if they will admit me,” returned Paul, whom many and conflicting thoughts rendered laconic.

“Oh! no fear of that, under my auspices. To tell you the truth, though we are a tolerant sect, we welcome every new proselyte with enthusiasm. But are you tired?”

“A little; the house is not far, you say?”

"About a mile off," answered Tomlinson. "Lean on me."

Our wanderers now, leaving the haystack, struck across part of Finchley Common; for the abode of the worthy publican was felicitously situated; and the scene in which his guests celebrated their festivities was close by that on which they often performed their exploits.

As they proceeded, Paul questioned his friend touching the name and character of "mine host," and the all-knowing Augustus Tomlinson answered him, Quaker-like, by a question.

"Have you never heard of Gentleman George?"

"What! the noted head of a flash public-house in the country? To be sure I have, often; my poor nurse, Dame Lobkins, used to say he was the best-spoken man in the trade."

"Ay, so he is still. In his youth, George was a very handsome fellow, but a little too fond of his lass and his bottle to please his father, a very staid old gentleman, who walked about on Sundays in a bob-wig and a gold-headed cane, and was a much better farmer on week-days than he was head of a public-house. George used to be a remarkably smart-dressed fellow, and so he is to this day. He has a great deal of wit, is a very good whist-player, has a capital cellar, and is so fond of seeing his friends drunk that he bought, some time ago, a large pewter measure in which six men can stand upright. The girls, or rather the old women, to which last he used to be much more civil of the two, always liked him; they say, nothing is so fine as his fine speeches, and they give him the title of '*Gentleman George*.' He is a nice, kind-hearted man in many things. Pray Heaven we shall have no cause to miss him when he

departs. But, to tell you the truth, he takes more than his share of our common purse."

"What, is he avaricious?"

"Quite the reverse; but he is so cursedly fond of building, he invests all *his* money (and wants us to invest all *ours*) in houses; and there's one confounded dog of a bricklayer, who runs him up terrible bills, — a fellow called 'Cunning Nat,' who is equally adroit in spoiling ground and improving *ground rent*."

"What do you mean?"

"Ah! thereby hangs a tale. But we are near the place now; you will see a curious set."

As Tomlinson said this, the pair approached a house standing alone, and seemingly without any other abode in the vicinity. It was of curious and grotesque shape, painted white with a Gothic chimney, a Chinese sign-post (on which was depicted a gentleman fishing, with the words "The Jolly Angler" written beneath), and a porch that would have been Grecian, if it had not been Dutch. It stood in a little field, with a hedge behind it, and the common in front. Augustus stopped at the door, and, while he paused, bursts of laughter rang cheerily within.

"Ah! the merry boys," he muttered; "I long to be with them!" and then with his clenched fist he knocked four times on the door. There was a sudden silence, which lasted about a minute, and was broken by a voice within, asking who was there. Tomlinson answered by some cabalistic word; the door was opened, and a little boy presented himself.

"Well, my lad," said Augustus, "and how is your master? Stout and hearty, if I may judge by his voice."

"Ay, Master Tommy; ay, he's boozing away at a

fine rate in the back-parlor, with Mr. Pepper and Fighting Attie, and half a score more of them. He'll be woundy glad to see you, I'll be bound."

"Show this gentleman into the bar," rejoined Augustus, "while I go and pay my respects to honest Geordie."

The boy made a sort of a bow, and leading our hero into the bar, consigned him to the care of Sal, a buxom barmaid, who reflected credit on the taste of the landlord, and who received Paul with marked distinction and a gill of brandy.

Paul had not long to play the amiable, before Tomlinson rejoined him with the information that Gentleman George would be most happy to see him in the back-parlor, and that he would there find an old friend in the person of Mr. Pepper.

"What! is he here?" cried Paul. "The sorry knave, to let me be caged in his stead!"

"Gently, gently, no misapplication of terms," said Augustus; "that was not knavery, that was *prudence*, the greatest of all virtues, and the rarest. But come along, and Pepper shall *explain* to-morrow."

Threading a gallery or passage, Augustus preceded our hero, opened a door, and introduced him into a long, low apartment, where sat, round a table spread with pipes and liquor, some ten or a dozen men, while at the top of the table, in an arm-chair, presided Gentleman George. That dignitary was a portly and comely gentleman, with a knowing look and a Welsh wig, worn, as the "Morning Chronicle" says of his Majesty's hat, "in a *déagé* manner, on one side." Being afflicted with the gout, his left foot reclined on a stool; and the attitude developed, despite of a lamb's-wool stocking, the remains of an exceedingly good leg.

As Gentleman George was a person of majestic dignity among the Knights of the Cross, we trust we shall not be thought irreverent in applying a few of the words by which the foresaid "Morning Chronicle" depicted his Majesty on the day he laid the first stone of his father's monument, to the description of Gentleman George.

"He had on a handsome blue coat, and a white waistcoat;" moreover, "he laughed most good-humoredly," as, turning to Augustus Tomlinson, he saluted him with, —

"So, this is the youngster you present to us! Welcome to the 'Jolly Angler'! Give us thy hand, young sir: I shall be happy to blow a cloud with thee."

"With all due submission," said Mr. Tomlinson, "I think it may first be as well to introduce my pupil and friend to his future companions."

"You speak like a leary cove," cried Gentleman George, still squeezing our hero's hand; and turning round in his elbow-chair, he pointed to each member, as he severally introduced his guests to Paul.

"Here," said he, — "here 's a fine chap at my right hand" (the person thus designated was a thin, military-looking figure, in a shabby riding frock, and with a commanding, bold, aquiline countenance, a little the worse for wear), — "here 's a fine chap for you; Fighting Attie we calls him: he 's a devil on the road. 'Halt — deliver — must and shall — can't and sha'n't — do as I bid you, or go to the devil,' — that 's all Fighting Attie's palaver; and, 'sdeath, it has a wonderful way of coming to the point! A famous cull is my friend Attie: an old soldier; has seen the world, and knows what is what; has lots of gumption, and devil a bit of blarney. Howsomever, the highflyers does n't like him; and when he takes people's money, he need not be quite

so cross about it! — Attie, let me introduce a new pal to you." Paul made his bow.

"Stand at ease, man!" quoth the veteran, without taking the pipe from his mouth.

Gentleman George then continued, and, after pointing out four or five of the company (among whom our hero discovered, to his surprise, his old friends Mr. Eustace Fitzherbert and Mr. William Howard Russell), came, at length, to one with a very red face, and a lusty frame of body. "That gentleman," said he, "is Scarlet Jem; a dangerous fellow for a *press*, though he says he likes robbing alone now; for a general press is not half such a good thing as it used to be formerly. You have no idea what a hand at disguising himself Scarlet Jem is. He has an old wig which he generally does business in; and you would not go for to know him again when he conceals himself under the *wig*. Oh, he's a precious rogue is Scarlet Jem! As for the cove on t' other side," continued the host of the "Jolly Angler," pointing to Long Ned, "all I can say of him, good, bad, or indifferent, is, that he has an unkimmon fine head of hair: and now, youngster, as you knows him, s'pose you goes and sits by him, and he'll introduce you to the rest: for, split my wig!" Gentleman George was a bit of a swearer, — "if I be n't tired, and so here's to your health; and if so be as your name's Paul, may you alway rob *Peter*¹ in order to pay *Paul*!"

This witticism of mine host's being exceedingly well received, Paul went, amidst the general laughter, to take possession of the vacant seat beside Long Ned. That tall gentleman, who had hitherto been cloud-compelling (as Homer calls Jupiter) in profound silence, now turned

¹ Peter, — a portmanteau.

to Paul with the warmest cordiality, declared himself overjoyed to meet his old friend once more, and congratulated him alike on his escape from Bridewell, and his admission to the councils of Gentleman George. But Paul, mindful of that exertion of "prudence" on the part of Mr. Pepper, by which he had been left to his fate and the mercy of Justice Burnflat, received his advances very sullenly. This coolness so incensed Ned, who was naturally choleric, that he turned his back on our hero, and, being of an aristocratic spirit, muttered something about "upstart and vulgar clyfakers being admitted to the company of swell tobymen." This murmur called all Paul's blood into his cheek; for though he had been punished as a clyfaker (or pick-pocket), nobody knew better than Long Ned whether or not he was innocent, and a reproach from him came therefore with double injustice and severity. In his wrath he seized Mr. Pepper by the ear, and, telling him he was a shabby scoundrel, challenged him to fight.

So pleasing an invitation not being announced *sotto voce*, but in a tone suited to the importance of the proposition, every one around heard it; and before Long Ned could answer, the full voice of Gentleman George thundered forth, —

"Keep the peace there, you youngster! What! are you just admitted into our merry-makings, and must you be wrangling already? Hark ye, gemmen, I have been plagued enough with your quarrels before now; and the first cove as breaks the present quiet of the 'Jolly Angler,' shall be turned out neck and crop, — sha'n't he, Attie?"

"Right about, march," said the hero.

"Ay, that 's the word, Attie," said Gentleman George. "And now, Mr. Pepper, if there be any ill blood 'twixt

you and the lad there, wash it away in a bumper of bingo, and let's hear no more whatsoever about it."

"I am willing," cried Long Ned, with the deferential air of a courtier, and holding out his hand to Paul. Our hero, being somewhat abashed by the novelty of his situation, and the rebuke of Gentleman George, accepted, though with some reluctance, the proffered courtesy.

Order being thus restored, the conversation of the convivialists began to assume a most fascinating bias. They talked with infinite *goût* of the sums they had levied on the public, and the peculations they had committed for what one called the "*good of the community*," and another, the "*established order*," — meaning themselves. It was easy to see in what school the discerning Augustus Tomlinson had learned the value of words.

There was something edifying in hearing the rascals! So nice was their language, and so honest their enthusiasm for their own interests, you might have imagined you were listening to a coterie of cabinet ministers conferring on taxes, or debating on perquisites.

"Long may the *Commons* flourish," cried punning Georgie, filling his glass. "It is by the commons we're fed, and may they never know cultivation!"

"Three times three!" shouted Long Ned: and the toast was drunk as Mr. Pepper proposed.

"A little moderate cultivation of the commons, to speak frankly," said Augustus Tomlinson, modestly, "might not be amiss; for it would decoy people into the belief that they might travel safely; and, after all, a hedge or a barley-field is as good for us as a barren heath, where we have no shelter if once pursued!"

"You talks nonsense, you spooney!" cried a robber

of note, called Bagshot, who, being aged, and having been a lawyer's footboy, was sometimes denominated "Old Bags." "You talks nonsense; these innowating ploughs are the ruin of us. Every blade of corn in a common is an encroachment on the constitution and rights of the gemmen highwaymen. I'm old, and may n't live to see these things; but, mark my words, a time will come when a man may go from Lunnun to Johnny Groat's without losing a penny by one of us,—when Hounslow will be safe, and Finchley secure. My eyes, what a sad thing for us that 'll be!"

The venerable old man became suddenly silent, and the tears started to his eyes. Gentleman George had a great horror of blue devils, and particularly disliked all disagreeable subjects.

"Thunder and oons, Old Bags!" quoth mine host of the "Jolly Angler," "this will never do; we're all met here to be merry, and not to listen to your mullancolly taratarantarums. I says, Ned Pepper, s'pose you tips us a song, and I'll beat time with my knuckles."

Long Ned, taking the pipe from his mouth, attempted, like Walter Scott's Lady Heron, one or two pretty excuses: these being drowned by a universal shout, the handsome purloiner gave the following song, to the tune of "Time has not thinned my flowing hair."

LONG NED'S SONG.

I.

Oh, if my hands adhere to cash,
My gloves at least are clean,
And rarely have the gentry flash
In sprucer clothes been seen.

II.

Sweet Public, since your coffers must
Afford our wants relief,
Oh ! soothes it not to yield the dust
To such a charming thief ?

III.

I never robbed a single coach
But with a lover's air ;
And though you might my *course* reproach,
You never could my *hair*.

IV.

John Bull, who loves a harmless joke,
Is apt at me to grin ;
But why be cross with laughing folk,
Unless they laugh and win ?

V.

John Bull has money in his box ;
And though his wit's divine,
Yet let me laugh at Johnny's *locks*, —
And John may laugh at mine !

“ ‘ And John may laugh at mine ! ’ Excellent ! ” cried Gentleman George, lighting his pipe and winking at Attie. “ I hears as how you be a famous fellow with the lasses.”

Ned smiled, and answered, “ No man should boast ; but — ” Pepper paused significantly, and then, glancing at Attie, said, “ Talking of lasses, it is my turn to knock down a gentleman for a song, and I knock down Fighting Attie.”

“ I never sing,” said the warrior.

“ Treason, treason,” cried Pepper. “ It is the law, and you must obey the law : so begin.”

"It is true, Attie," said Gentleman George.

There was no appeal from the honest publican's fiat; so, in a quick and laconic manner, it being Attie's favorite dogma that the least said is the soonest mended, the warrior sang as follows:—

FIGHTING ATTIE'S SONG.

Air — "He was famed for deeds of arms."

"Rise at six, dine at two, —
Rob your man without ado :
Such my maxims, — if you doubt
Their wisdom to the right about."

*(Signing to a sallow gentleman on the same side of the table to
send up the brandy bowl.)*

"Pass round the bingo, — of a gun,
You musky, dusky, husky son!"¹

(The sallow gentleman in a hoarse voice,)

"Attie, — the bingo's now with me,
I can't resign it yet, d'ye see!"

(Attie, seizing the bowl,)

"Resign, resign it, cease your dust!"

(Wresting it away, and fiercely regarding the sallow gentleman.)

"You have resigned it, and you must."

Chorus.

"You have resigned it, and you must."

While the chorus, laughing at the discomfited tippler, yelled forth the emphatic words of the heroic Attie, that

¹ Much of whatever amusement might be occasioned by the not (we trust) ill-natured travesties of certain eminent characters in this part of our work, when first published, like all political allusions, loses point and becomes obscure as the applications cease to be familiar. It is already necessary, perhaps, to say that Fighting Attie herein typifies or illustrates the Duke of Wellington's abrupt dismissal of Mr. Huskisson.

personage emptied the brandy at a draught, resumed his pipe, and, in as few words as possible, called on Bagshot for a song. The excellent old highwayman, with great diffidence, obeyed the request, cleared his throat, and struck off with a ditty somewhat to the tune of "The Old Woman."

OLD BAGS'S SONG.

Are the days then gone, when on Hounslow Heath
 We flashed our nags ?
 When the stoutest bosoms quailed beneath
 The voice of Bags ?
 Ne'er was my work half undone, lest
 I should be nabbed :
 Slow was Old Bags, but he never ceased
 Till the whole was grabbed.

Chorus.

Till the whole was grabbed.

When the slow coach paused, and the gemmen stormed,
 I bore the brunt,—
 And the only sound which my grave lips formed
 Was "blunt," — still "blunt!"
 Oh! those jovial days are ne'er forgot! —
 But the tape lags, —
 When I be's dead, you'll drink one pot
 To poor Old Bags!

Chorus.

To poor Old Bags!

"Ay, that we will, my dear Bagshot," cried Gentleman George, affectionately; but, observing a tear in the fine old fellow's eye, he added, "Cheer up. What, ho! cheer up! Times will improve, and Providence may yet send us one good year, when you shall be as well off

as ever! You shakes your poll. Well, don't be hum-durged, but knock down a gemman."

Dashing away the drop of sensibility, the veteran knocked down Gentleman George himself.

"Oh, dang it!" said George, with an air of dignity, "I ought to skip, since I finds the lush; but howsom-ever, here goes."

GENTLEMAN GEORGE'S SONG.

Air — "Old King Cole."

I be's the cove, — the merry old cove,
Of whose max all the *rufflers* sing.
And a lushing cove, I thinks, by Jove,
Is as great as a sober king!

Chorus.

Is as great as a sober king!

Whatever the noise as is made by the boys
At the bar, as they lush away,
The devil a noise my peace alloys,
As long as the rascals pay!

Chorus.

As long as the rascals pay!

What if I sticks my stones and my bricks,
With mortar I takes from the snobbish?
All who can feel for the public weal
Likes the public-house to be bobbish.

Chorus.

Likes the public-house to be bobbish.

"There, gemmen!" said the publican, stopping short,
"that's the pith of the matter, and split my wig but

I'm short of breath now. So, send round the brandy, Augustus: you sly dog, you keeps it all to yourself."

By this time the whole conclave were more than half-seas-over, or, as Augustus Tomlinson expressed it, "their more austere qualities were relaxed by a pleasing and innocent indulgence." Paul's eyes reeled, and his tongue ran loose. By degrees the room swam round, the faces of his comrades altered, the countenance of Old Bags assumed an awful and menacing air. He thought Long Ned insulted him, and that Old Bags took the part of the assailant, doubled his fists, and threatened to put the plaintiff's nob into chancery, if he disturbed the peace of the meeting. Various other imaginary evils beset him. He thought he had robbed a mail-coach in company with Pepper; that Tomlinson informed against him, and that Gentleman George ordered him to be hanged; in short, he labored under a temporary delirium, occasioned by a sudden reverse of fortune, — from water to brandy; and the last thing of which he retained any recollection before he sank under the table, in company with Long Ned, Scarlet Jem, and Old Bags, was, the bearing his part in the burden of what appeared to him a chorus of last dying speeches and confessions, but what in reality was a song made in honor of Gentleman George, and sung by his grateful guests as a finale to the festivities. It ran thus: —

THE ROBBER'S GRAND TOAST.

A tumbler of blue ruin fill, fill for me,
Red tape those as likes it may drain;
But whatever the lush, it a bumper must be,
If we ne'er drinks a bumper again!
Now — now in the crib where a *ruffler* may lie,
Without fear that the *traps* should distress him,

With a drop in the mouth and a drop in the eye,
Here's to Gentleman George, — God bless him !
God bless him, — God bless him !
Here's to Gentleman George, — God bless him !

'Mong the pals of the Prince I have heard it's the go,
Before they have tippled enough,
To smarten their punch with the best curaçoa,
More conish to render the stuff !
I boast not such lush ! — but whoever his glass
Does not like, I 'll be hanged if I press him !
Upstanding, my kiddies, — round, round let it pass !
Here's to Gentleman George, — God bless him !
God bless him, — God bless him !
Here's to Gentleman George, — God bless him !

See, see, — the fine fellow grows weak on the stumps !
Assist him, ye rascals, to stand !
Why, ye stir not a peg ! Are you all in the dumps ?
Fighting Attie, go lend him a hand !

*(The robbers crowd around Gentleman George, each, under pretence
of supporting him, pulling him first one way and then another.)*

Come, lean upon me, — at your service I am !
Get away from his elbow, you whelp ! — him
You 'll only upset, — them 'ere fellows but sham !
Here's to Gentleman George, — God help him !
God help him, — God help him !
Here's to Gentleman George, — God help him !

CHAPTER XI.

I boast no song in magic wonders rife.
But yet, O Nature! is there naught to prize,
Familiar in thy bosom scenes of life?
And dwells in daylight truth's salubrious skies
No form with which the soul may sympathize?
Young, innocent, on whose sweet forehead mild,
The parted ringlet shone in simplest guise, —
An inmate in the home of Albert smiled,
Or blest his noonday walk, — she was his only child.
Gertrude of Wyoming.

O TIME, thou hast played strange tricks with us! and we bless the stars that made us a novelist, and permit us now to retaliate. Leaving Paul to the instructions of Augustus Tomlinson, and the festivities of the "Jolly Angler," and suffering him, by slow but sure degrees, to acquire the graces and the reputation of the accomplished and perfect appropriator of other men's possessions, we shall pass over the lapse of years with the same heedless rapidity with which they have glided over us, and summon our reader to a very different scene from those which would be likely to greet his eyes, were he following the adventures of our new Telemachus. Nor wilt thou, dear reader, whom we make the umpire between ourself and those who never read, — the critics: thou who hast, in the true spirit of gentle breeding, gone with us among places where the novelty of the scene has, we fear, scarcely atoned for the coarseness, not giving thyself the airs of a dainty abigail, — not prating, lackey-like, on the low company thou hast

met: nor wilt thou, dear and friendly reader, have cause to dread that we shall weary thy patience by a "damnable iteration" of the same localities. Pausing for a moment to glance over the divisions of our story, which lies before us like a map, we feel that we may promise in future to conduct thee among aspects of society more familiar to thy habits; where events flow to their allotted gulf through landscapes of more pleasing variety and among tribes of a more luxurious civilization.

Upon the banks of one of fair England's fairest rivers, and about fifty miles distant from London, still stands an old-fashioned abode, which we shall here term Warlock Manor House. It is a building of brick, varied by stone copings, and covered in great part with ivy and jasmine. Around it lie the ruins of the elder part of the fabric, and these are sufficiently numerous in extent, and important in appearance, to testify that the mansion was once not without pretensions to the magnificent. These remains of power, some of which bear date as far back as the reign of Henry III., are sanctioned by the character of the country immediately in the vicinity of the old manor-house. A vast tract of waste land, interspersed with groves of antique pollards, and here and there irregular and sinuous ridges of green mound, betokened to the experienced eye the evidence of a dismantled chase or park, which must originally have been of no common dimensions. On one side of the house the lawn slopes towards the river, divided from a terrace, which forms the most important embellishment of the pleasure-grounds, by that fence to which has been given the ingenious and significant name of "ha-ha!" A few scattered trees of giant growth are the sole obstacles that break the view of the river, which has often seemed to us, at that particular passage of its course, to

glide with unusual calmness and serenity. On the opposite side of the stream there is a range of steep hills, celebrated for nothing more romantic than their property of imparting to the flocks that browse upon their short, and seemingly stinted herbage, a flavor peculiarly grateful to the lovers of that pastoral animal which changes its name into mutton after its decease. Upon these hills the vestige of human habitation is not visible; and at times, when no boat defaces the lonely smoothness of the river, and the evening has stilled the sounds of labor and of life, we know few scenes so utterly tranquil, so steeped in quiet, as that which is presented by the old, quaint-fashioned house and its antique grounds,—the smooth lawn, the silent, and (to speak truly, though disparagingly) the somewhat sluggish river, together with the large hills (to which we know, from simple though metaphysical causes, how entire an idea of quiet and immovability peculiarly attaches itself), and the white flocks—those most peaceful of God's creatures—that in fleecy clusters stud the ascent.

In Warlock House, at the time we refer to, lived a gentleman of the name of Brandon. He was a widower, and had attained his fiftieth year without casting much regret on the past, or feeling much anxiety for the future. In a word, Joseph Brandon was one of those careless, quiescent, indifferent men, by whom a thought upon any subject is never recurred to without a very urgent necessity. He was good-natured, inoffensive, and weak; and, if he was not an incomparable citizen, he was, at least, an excellent vegetable. He was of a family of high antiquity, and formerly of considerable note. For the last four or five generations, however, the proprietors of Warlock House, gradually losing

something alike from their acres and their consequence, had left to their descendants no higher rank than that of a small country squire. One had been a Jacobite, and had drunk out half-a-dozen farms in honor of Charley over the water: Charley over the water was no very dangerous person, but Charley over the wine was rather more ruinous. The next Brandon had been a fox-hunter, and fox-hunters live as largely as patriotic politicians. Pausanias tells us, that the same people who were the most notorious for their love of wine, were also the most notorious for their negligence of affairs. Times are not much altered since Pausanias wrote, and the remark holds as good with the English as it did with the Phigalei. After this Brandon came one who, though he did not scorn the sportsman, rather assumed the fine gentleman. He married an heiress, who, of course, assisted to ruin him; wishing *no* assistance in so pleasing an occupation, he overturned her (*perhaps* not on purpose) in a new sort of carriage which he was learning to drive, and the good lady was killed on the spot. She left the fine gentleman two sons, Joseph Brandon, the present thane, and a brother some years younger. The elder, being of a fitting age, was sent to school, and somewhat escaped the contagion of the paternal mansion. But the younger Brandon, having only reached his fifth year at the time of his mother's decease, was retained at home. Whether he was handsome, or clever, or impertinent, or like his father about the eyes (that greatest of all merits), we know not; but the widower became so fond of him that it was at a late period, and with great reluctance, that he finally intrusted him to the providence of a school.

Among harlots and gamblers and lords and sharpers and gentlemen of the guards, together with their

frequent accompaniments, guards of the gentlemen, — namely, bailiffs, — William Brandon passed the first stage of his boyhood. He was about thirteen when he was sent to school; and, being a boy of remarkable talents, he recovered lost time so well that when, at the age of nineteen, he adjourned to the university, he had scarcely resided there a single term before he had borne off two of the highest prizes awarded to academical merit. From the university he departed on “the grand tour,” at that time thought so necessary to complete the gentleman; he went in company with a young nobleman, whose friendship he had won at the university, stayed abroad more than two years, and on his return he settled down to the profession of the law.

Meanwhile his father died, and his fortune, as a younger brother, being literally next to nothing, and the family estate (for his brother was not *unwilling* to assist him) being terribly involved, it was believed that he struggled for some years with very embarrassed and penurious circumstances. During this interval of his life, however, he was absent from London, and by his brother supposed to have returned to the Continent; at length, it seems, he profited by a renewal of his friendship with the young nobleman who had accompanied him abroad, reappeared in town, and obtained, through his noble friend, one or two legal appointments of reputable emolument; soon afterwards he got a brief on some cause where a major had been raising a corps to his brother officer, with the better consent of the brother officer’s wife than of the brother officer himself. Brandon’s abilities here, for the first time in his profession, found an adequate vent; his reputation seemed made at once, he rose rapidly in his profession, and, at the time we now speak of, he was sailing down the full tide of

fame and wealth, the envy and the oracle of all young Templars and barristers who, having been starved themselves for ten years, began now to calculate on the possibility of starving their clients. At an early period in his career he had, through the good offices of the nobleman we have mentioned, obtained a seat in the House of Commons; and though his eloquence was of an order much better suited to the bar than the senate, he had nevertheless acquired a very considerable reputation in the latter, and was looked upon by many as likely to win the same brilliant fortunes as the courtly Mansfield, — a great man, whose political principles and urbane address Brandon was supposed especially to affect as his own model. Of unblemished integrity in public life, — for, as he supported all things that exist with the most unbending rigidity, he could not be accused of inconsistency, — William Brandon was (as we have said in a former place of unhappy memory to our hero) esteemed in private life the most honorable, the most moral, even the most austere of men; and his grave and stern repute on this score, joined to the dazzle of his eloquence and forensic powers, had baffled in great measure the rancor of party hostility, and obtained for him a character for virtues almost as high and as enviable as that which he had acquired for abilities.

While William was thus treading a noted and an honorable career, his elder brother, who had married into a clergyman's family, and soon lost his consort, had with his only child, a daughter named Lucy, resided in his paternal mansion in undisturbed obscurity. The discreditable character and habits of the preceding lords of Warlock, which had sunk their respectability in the county, as well as curtailed their property, had rendered the surrounding gentry little anxious to cul-

tivate the intimacy of the present proprietor; and the heavy mind and retired manners of Joseph Brandon were not calculated to counterbalance the faults of his forefathers, nor to reinstate the name of Brandon in its ancient popularity and esteem. Though dull and little cultivated, the squire was not without his "proper pride;" he attempted not to intrude himself where he was unwelcome; avoided county meetings and county balls; smoked his pipe with the parson, and not unoften with the surgeon and the solicitor; and suffered his daughter Lucy to educate herself, with the help of the parson's wife, and to ripen (for nature was more favorable to her than art) into the very prettiest girl that the whole county—we long to say the whole country—at that time could boast of. Never did glass give back a more lovely image than that of Lucy Brandon at the age of nineteen. Her auburn hair fell in the richest luxuriance over a brow never ruffled, and a cheek where the blood never slept; with every instant the color varied, and at every variation that smooth, pure, virgin cheek seemed still more lovely than before. She had the most beautiful laugh that one who loved music could imagine,—silvery, low, and yet so full of joy! all her movements, as the old parson said, seemed to keep time to that laugh; for mirth made a great part of her innocent and childish temper; and yet the mirth was feminine, never loud, nor like that of young ladies who had received the last finish at Highgate seminaries. Everything joyous affected her, and at once: air, flowers, sunshine, butterflies. Unlike heroines in general, she very seldom cried, and she saw nothing charming in having the vapors. But she never looked so beautiful as in sleep! and as the light breath came from her parted lips, and the ivory lids closed over those eyes

which only in sleep were silent; and her attitude in her sleep took that ineffable grace belonging solely to childhood, or the fresh youth into which childhood merges, — she was just what you might imagine a sleeping Margaret, before that most simple and gentle of all a poet's visions of womanhood had met with Faust, or her slumbers been ruffled with a dream of love.

We cannot say much for Lucy's intellectual acquirements: she could, thanks to the parson's wife, spell indifferently well, and write a tolerable hand; she made preserves, and sometimes riddles, — it was more difficult to question the excellence of the former than to answer the queries of the latter. She worked to the admiration of all who knew her, and we beg leave to say that we deem that "an excellent thing in woman." She made caps for herself and gowns for the poor; and now and then she accomplished the more literary labor of a stray novel that had wandered down to the manor-house, or an abridgment of ancient history, in which was omitted everything but the proper names. To these attainments she added a certain modicum of skill upon the spinet, and the power of singing old songs with the richest and sweetest voice that ever made one's eye moisten, or one's heart beat.

Her moral qualities were more fully developed than her mental. She was the kindest of human beings; the very dog that had never seen her before, knew that truth at the first glance, and lost no time in making her acquaintance. The goodness of her heart reposed upon her face like sunshine, and the old wife at the lodge said poetically and truly of the effect it produced, that "one felt warm when one looked on her." If we could abstract from the description a certain chilling transparency, the following exquisite verses of a forgotten

poet¹ might express the purity and lustre of her countenance: —

“Her face was like the milky way i’ the sky,
A meeting of gentle lights without a name.”

She was surrounded by pets of all kinds, ugly and handsome, from Ralph the raven, to Beauty the pheasant, and from Bob the sheep-dog without a tail, to Beau the Blenheim with blue ribbons round his neck; all things loved her, and she loved all things. It seemed doubtful at that time whether she would ever have sufficient steadiness and strength of character. Her beauty and her character appeared so essentially womanlike, — soft yet lively, buoyant yet caressing, — that you could scarcely place in her that moral dependence that you might in a character less amiable, but less yieldingly feminine. Time, however, and circumstance, which alter and harden, were to decide whether the inward nature did not possess some latent and yet undiscovered properties. Such was Lucy Brandon in the year —, and in that year, on a beautiful autumnal evening, we first introduce her personally to our readers.

She was sitting on a garden-seat by the river-side with her father, who was deliberately conning the evening paper of a former week, and gravely seasoning the ancient news with the inspirations of that weed which so bitterly excited the royal indignation of our British Solomon. It happens, unfortunately for us, — for outward peculiarities are scarcely worthy the dignity to which comedy, whether in the drama or the narrative, aspires, — that Squire Brandon possessed so few distinguishing traits of mind, that he leaves his delineator little whereby to designate him, save a confused and

¹ Suckling.

parenthetical habit of speech, by which he very often appeared, to those who did not profit by long experience or close observation, to say exactly, and somewhat ludicrously, that which *he* did not mean to convey.

"I say, Lucy," observed Mr. Brandon, but without lifting his eyes from the paper: "I say, corn has fallen, — think of that, girl, think of that! These times, in my opinion (ay, and in the opinion of wiser heads than mine, though I do not mean to say that I have not some experience in these matters, which is more than can be said of *all our neighbors*), *are very curious, and even dangerous.*"

"Indeed, papa!" answered Lucy.

"And I say, Lucy, dear," resumed the squire, after a short pause, "there has been (and very strange it is, too, when one considers the crowded neighborhood. Bless me! what times these are!) a shocking murder committed upon (*the tobacco-stopper*, — there it is) — think, you know, girl: just by Epping! — an old gentleman!"

"Dear, how shocking! by whom?"

"Ay, that's the question! The coroner's inquest has (what a blessing it is to live in a civilized country, where a man does not die without knowing the why and the wherefore!) sat on the body, and declared (it is very strange, but they don't seem to have made much discovery: for why? — we knew as much before) that the body was found (it was found on the floor, Lucy) murdered; *murderer or murderers* (*in the bureau*, which was broken open, they found the money left quite untouched) unknown!"

Here there was again a slight pause, and, passing to another side of the paper, Mr. Brandon resumed in a quicker tone, —

"Ha! well, now this is odd! But he's a deuced clever fellow, Lucy! that brother of mine has (and in a very honorable manner too, which I am sure is highly creditable to the family, though he has not taken too much notice of me lately, — a circumstance which, considering I am his elder brother, I am a little angry at) distinguished himself in a speech, remarkable, the paper says, for its great legal (I wonder, by the by, whether William could get me that agistment money! 't is a heavy thing to lose: but going to law, as my poor father used to say, is like fishing for gudgeons [not a bad little fish, *we can have some for supper*] *with guineas*) knowledge, as well as its splendid and overpowering (I do love Will for keeping up the family honor; I am sure it is more than I have done, — heigh-ho!) eloquence!"

"And on what subject has he been speaking, papa?"

"Oh, a very fine subject; what you call a (it is astonishing that in this country there should be such a wish for taking away people's characters, which, for my part, I don't see is a bit more entertaining than what you are always doing, — playing with those stupid birds) libel!"

"But is not my uncle William coming down to see us? He promised to do so, and it made you quite happy, papa, for two days. I hope he will not disappoint you; and I am sure that it is not his fault if he ever seems to neglect you. He spoke of you to me, when I saw him, in the kindest and most affectionate manner. I do think, my dear father, that he loves you very much."

"Ahem!" said the squire, evidently flattered, and yet not convinced. "My brother Will is a very acute fellow, and I make no — my dear little girl — question, but that (when you have seen as much of the world as I have, you will grow suspicious) he thought that any good

word, said of me to my daughter, would (you see, Lucy, I am as clear-sighted as my neighbors, though I don't give myself all their airs; which I very well might do, considering my great-great-great-grandfather, Hugo Brandon, had a hand in detecting the Gunpowder Plot) be told to me again!"

"Nay, but I am quite sure my uncle never spoke of you to me with that intention."

"Possibly, my dear child; but when (the evenings are much shorter than they were!) did you talk with your uncle about me?"

"Oh, when staying with Mrs. Warner, in London; to be sure, it is six years ago; but I remember it perfectly. I recollect in particular, that he spoke of you very handsomely to Lord Mauleverer, who dined with him one evening when I was there, and when my uncle was so kind as to take me to the play. I was afterwards quite sorry that he was so good-natured, as he lost (you remember I told you the story) a very valuable watch."

"Ay, ay, I remember all about that, and so, — how long friendship lasts with some people! — Lord Mauleverer dined with William! What a fine thing it is for a man (it is what I never did, — indeed, I like being what they call 'Cock of the Walk:' let me see, now I think of it, Pillum comes to-night to play a hit at backgammon) to make friends with a great man early in (yet Will did not do it very early, poor fellow! he struggled first with a great deal of sorrow, hardship, that is —) life! It is many years now, since Will has been hand-and-glove with my ('t is a bit of a puppy) Lord Mauleverer, — what did you think of his lordship?"

"Of Lord Mauleverer? Indeed, I scarcely observed him; but he seemed a handsome man, and was very polite. Mrs. Warner said he had been a very wicked

person when he was young, but he seems good-natured enough now, papa."

"By the by," said the squire, "his lordship has just been made (this new ministry seems very unlike the old, which rather puzzles me; for I think it my duty, d' ye see, Lucy, always to vote for his Majesty's government, especially seeing that old Hugo Brandon had a hand in detecting the Gunpowder Plot; and it is a little odd, at least at first, to think that good now which one has always before been thinking abominable) Lord Lieutenant of the county."

"Lord Mauleverer our Lord Lieutenant?"

"Yes, child: and since his lordship is such a friend of my brother's, I should think, considering especially what an old family in the county we are, — not that I wish to intrude myself where I am not thought as fine as the rest, — that he would be more attentive to us than Lord — was; but that, my dear Lucy, puts me in mind of Pillum, and so, perhaps, you would like to walk to the parson's, as it is a fine evening. John shall come for you at nine o'clock *with* (the moon is not up then) the lantern."

Leaning on his daughter's willing arm, the good old man then rose and walked homeward; and so soon as she had wheeled round his easy-chair, placed the backgammon-board on the table, and wished the old gentleman an easy victory over his expected antagonist, the apothecary, Lucy tied down her bonnet, and took her way to the rectory.

When she arrived at the clerical mansion, and entered the drawing-room, she was surprised to find the parson's wife, a good, homely, lethargic old lady, run up to her, seemingly in a state of great nervous agitation, and crying, —

"Oh, my dear Miss Brandon! which way did you come? Did you meet nobody by the road? Oh, I am so frightened! Such an accident to poor, dear Dr. Sloperton! Stopped in the king's highway, robbed of some tithe-money he had just received from Farmer Slowforth: if it had not been for that dear angel, good young man, God only knows whether I might not have been a disconsolate widow by this time!"

While the affectionate matron was thus running on, Lucy's eye, glancing round the room, discovered in an arm-chair the round and oily little person of Dr. Sloperton, with a countenance from which all the carnation hues, save in one circular excrescence on the nasal member, that was left, like the last rose of summer, blooming alone, were faded into an aspect of miserable pallor: the little man tried to conjure up a smile while his wife was narrating his misfortune, and to mutter forth some syllable of unconcern; but he looked, for all his bravado, so exceedingly scared, that Lucy would, despite herself, have laughed outright, had not her eye rested upon the figure of a young man who had been seated beside the reverend gentleman, but who had risen at Lucy's entrance, and who now stood gazing upon her intently, but with an air of great respect. Blushing deeply, and involuntarily, she turned her eyes hastily away, and, approaching the good doctor, made her inquiries into the present state of his nerves, in a graver tone than she had a minute before imagined it possible that she should have been enabled to command.

"Ah! my good young lady," said the doctor, squeezing her hand, "I—may, I may say the church, for am I not its minister?—was in imminent danger; but this excellent gentleman prevented the sacrilege, at least in great measure. I only lost some of my dues—my right-

ful dues — for which I console myself with thinking that the infamous and abandoned villain will suffer hereafter.”

“There cannot be the least doubt of *that*,” said the young man, “had he only robbed the mail-coach, or broken into a gentleman’s house, the offence might have been expiable; but to rob a clergyman, and a rector, too! — Oh, the sacrilegious dog!”

“Your warmth does you honor, sir,” said the doctor, beginning now to recover; “and I am very proud to have made the acquaintance of a gentleman of such truly religious opinions!”

“Ah!” cried the stranger, “my foible, sir, — if I may so speak, — is a sort of enthusiastic fervor for the Protestant Establishment. Nay, sir, I never come across the very *nave* of the church, without feeling an indescribable emotion, — a kind of sympathy, as it were, — with — with — you understand me, sir, — I fear I express myself ill.”

“Not at all, not at all!” exclaimed the doctor: “such sentiments are uncommon in one so young.”

“Sir, I learned them early in life from a friend and preceptor of mine, Mr. MacGrawler, and I trust they may continue with me to my dying day.”

Here the doctor’s servant entered with (we borrow a phrase from the novel of —) “the tea-equipage,” and Mrs. Slopperton, betaking herself to its superintendence, inquired, with more composure than hitherto had belonged to her demeanor, what sort of a looking creature the ruffian was.

“I will tell you, my dear; I will tell you, Miss Lucy, all about it. I was walking home from Mr. Slowforth’s, with his money in my pocket, thinking, my love, of buying you that topaz cross you wished to have.”

"Dear, good man!" cried Mrs. Sloperton; "what a fiend it must have been to rob so excellent a creature!"

"And," resumed the doctor, "it also occurred to me, that the madeira was nearly out, — the madeira, I mean, with the red seal; and I was thinking it might not be amiss to devote part of the money to buy six dozen more; and the remainder, my love, which would be about one pound eighteen, I thought I would divide, — 'for he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord!' — among the thirty poor families on the common: that is, if they behaved well, and the apples in the back garden were not feloniously abstracted!"

"Excellent, charitable man!" ejaculated Mrs. Sloperton.

"While I was thus meditating, I lifted my eyes, and saw before me two men: one of prodigious height, and with a great profusion of hair about his shoulders; the other was smaller, and wore his hat slouched over his face; it was a very large hat. My attention was arrested by the singularity of the tall person's hair; and, while I was smiling at its luxuriance, I heard him say to his companion, 'Well, Augustus, as you are such a moral dog, he is in your line, not mine: so I leave him to you.' Little did I think those words related to me. No sooner were they uttered, than the tall rascal leaped over a gate and disappeared; the other fellow then marching up to me, very smoothly asked me the way to the church, and while I was explaining to him to turn first to the right and then to the left and so on, — for the best way is, you know, exceedingly crooked, — the hypocritical scoundrel seized me by the collar and cried out, 'Your money, or your life!' I do assure you, that I never trembled so much; not, my dear Miss Lucy, so much for my own sake, as for the sake of the

thirty poor families on the common, whose wants it had been my intention to relieve. I gave up the money, finding my prayers and expostulations were in vain; and the dog then, brandishing over my head an enormous bludgeon, said, — what abominable language! — ‘I think, doctor, I shall put an end to an existence derogatory to yourself and useless to others.’ At that moment the young gentleman beside me sprang over the very gate by which the tall ruffian had disappeared, and cried, ‘Hold, villain!’ On seeing my deliverer, the coward started back, and plunged into a neighboring wood. The good young gentleman pursued him for a few minutes, but then returning to my aid, conducted me home; and as we used to say at school, —

‘Te rediisse incolumem gaudeo;’

which, being interpreted, means (sir, excuse a pun, I am sure so great a friend to the church understands Latin), — that I am very glad to get back safe to my tea. He! he! And now, Miss Lucy, you must thank that young gentleman for having saved the life of your pastoral teacher, which act will no doubt be remembered at the Great Day!”

As Lucy, looking towards the stranger, said something in compliment, she observed a vague, and, as it were, covert smile upon his countenance, which immediately, and as if by sympathy, conjured one to her own. The hero of the adventure, however, in a very grave tone, replied to her compliment, at the same time bowing profoundly: —

“Mention it not, madam! I were unworthy of the name of a Briton and a man, could I pass the highway without relieving the distress, or lightening the burden of a fellow-creature. And,” continued the stranger,

after a momentary pause, coloring while he spoke, and concluding in the high-flown gallantry of the day, "methinks it were sufficient reward, had I saved the whole church, instead of one of its most valuable members, to receive the thanks of a lady whom I might reasonably take for one of those celestial beings to whom we have been piously taught that the church is especially the care!"

Though there might have been something really ridiculous in this overstrained compliment, coupled as it was with the preservation of Dr. Slopperton, yet, coming from the mouth of one whom Lucy thought the very handsomest person she had ever seen, it appeared to her anything but absurd; and, for a very long time afterwards, her heart thrilled with pleasure, when she remembered that the cheek of the speaker had glowed, and his voice had trembled, as he spoke it.

The conversation now, turning from robbers in particular, dwelt upon robberies in general. It was edifying to hear the honest indignation with which the stranger spoke of the lawless depredators with whom the country, in that day of Macheaths, was infested.

"A pack of infamous rascals!" said he, in a glow, "who attempt to justify their misdeeds by the example of honest men; and who say, that they do no more than is done by lawyers and doctors, soldiers, clergymen, and ministers of state. Pitiful delusion, or rather shameless hypocrisy!"

"It all comes of educating the poor," said the doctor. "The moment they pretend to judge the conduct of their betters, — there's an end of all order! They see nothing sacred in the laws, though we hang the dogs ever so fast; and the very peers of the land, spiritual and temporal, cease to be venerable in their eyes."

"Talking of peers," said Mrs. Slopperton, "I hear that Lord Mauleverer is to pass by this road to-night, on his way to Mauleverer Park. Do you know his lordship, Miss Lucy? He is very intimate with your uncle."

"I have only seen him once," answered Lucy.

"Are you sure that his lordship will come this road?" asked the stranger, carelessly. "I heard something of it this morning, but did not know it was settled."

"Oh! quite so," rejoined Mrs. Slopperton. "His lordship's gentleman wrote for post-horses to meet his lordship at Wyburn, about three miles on the other side of the village, at ten o'clock to-night. His lordship is very impatient of delay."

"Pray," said the doctor, who had not much heeded this turn in the conversation, and was now "on hospitable cares intent," — "pray, sir, if not impertinent, are you visiting, or lodging in the neighborhood; or, will you take a bed with us?"

"You are extremely kind, my dear sir, but I fear I must soon wish you good evening. I have to look after a little property I have some miles hence, which, indeed, brought me down into this part of the world."

"Property! — in what direction, sir, if I may ask?" quoth the doctor; "I know the country for miles."

"Do you, indeed? — where's my property, you say? Why, it is rather difficult to describe it, and it is, after all, a mere trifle; it is only some common-land near the highroad, and I came down to try the experiment of *hedging and draining*."

"'T is a good plan, if one has capital, and does not require a speedy return."

"Yes: but one likes a good interest *for the loss of principal*, and a *speedy return* is always desirable; although, alas! it is often attended with risk."

"I hope, sir," said the doctor, "if you must leave us so soon, that your property will often bring you into our neighborhood."

"You overpower me with so much unexpected goodness," answered the stranger. "To tell you the truth, nothing can give me greater pleasure than to meet those again who have once obliged me."

"Whom you have obliged, rather!" cried Mrs. Sloperton, and then added, in a loud whisper, to Lucy, "How modest! but it is always so with true courage!"

"I assure you, madam," returned the benevolent stranger, "that I never think twice of the little favors I render my fellow-men: my only hope is, that they may be as forgetful as myself."

Charmed with so much unaffected goodness of disposition, the Doctor and Mrs. Sloperton now set up a sort of duet in praise of their guest. After enduring their commendations and compliments for some minutes with much grimace of disavowal and diffidence, the stranger's modesty seemed at last to take pain at the excess of their gratitude: and, accordingly, pointing to the clock, which was within a few minutes of nine, he said, —

"I fear, my respected host, and my admired hostess, that I must now leave you; I have far to go."

"But are you yourself not afraid of the highwaymen?" cried Mrs. Sloperton, interrupting him.

"The highwaymen!" said the stranger, smiling. "No! I do not fear *them*; besides, I have little about me worth robbing."

"Do you superintend your property yourself?" said the doctor, who farmed his own glebe, and who, unwilling to part with so charming a guest, seized him now by the button.

"Superintend it myself! — why, not exactly. There

is a *bailiff*, whose views of things don't agree with mine, and who now and then gives me a good deal of trouble."

"Then why don't you discharge him altogether?"

"Ah! I wish I could; but it is a necessary evil. We landed proprietors, my dear sir, must always be plagued with something of the sort. For my part, I have found those cursed bailiffs would take away, if they could, all the little property one has been trying to accumulate. But," abruptly changing his manner into one of great softness, "could I not proffer my services and my companionship to this young lady? Would she allow me to conduct her home, and, indeed, stamp this day upon my memory as one of the few delightful ones I have ever known?"

"Thank you, dear sir," said Mrs. Slopperton, answering at once for Lucy: "it is very considerate of you; and I am sure, my love, I could not think of letting you go home alone with old John, after such an adventure to the poor, dear doctor."

Lucy began an excuse, which the good lady would not hear. But as the servant whom Mr. Brandon was to send with a lantern to attend his daughter home, had not arrived, and as Mrs. Slopperton, despite her prepossessions in favor of her husband's deliverer, did not for a moment contemplate his accompanying, without any other attendance, her young friend across the fields at that unseasonable hour, the stranger was forced, for the present, to reassume his seat. An open harpsichord at one end of the room gave him an opportunity to make some remark upon music, and this introducing a eulogium on Lucy's voice from Mrs. Slopperton, necessarily ended in a request to Miss Brandon to indulge the stranger with a song. Never had Lucy, who was not a

shy girl, — she was too innocent to be bashful, — felt nervous hitherto in singing before a stranger. But now she hesitated and faltered, and went through a whole series of little natural affectations before she complied with the request. She chose a song composed somewhat after the old English school, which at that time was reviving into fashion. The song, though conveying a sort of conceit, was not, perhaps, altogether without tenderness; it was a favorite with Lucy, she scarcely knew why, and ran thus: —

LUCY'S SONG.

Why sleep, ye gentle flowers, ah, why,
When tender eve is falling,
And starlight drinks the happy sigh
Of winds to fairies calling?

Calling with low and plaining note,
Most like a ringdove chiding,
Or flute faint-heard from distant boat
O'er smoothest waters gliding.

Lo, round you steals the wooing breeze, —
Lo, on you falls the dew!
O Sweets, awake, for scarcely these
Can charm while wanting you!

Wake ye not yet, — while fast, below,
The silver time is fleeing?
O Heart of mine, those flowers but show
Thine own contented being.

The twilight but preserves the bloom,
The sun can but decay;
The warmth that brings the rich perfume,
But steals the life away.

O Heart, enjoy thy present calm,
Rest peaceful in the shade,
And dread the sun that gives the balm
To bid the blossom fade.

When Lucy ended, the stranger's praise was less loud than either the doctor's or his lady's; but how far more sweet it was: and for the first time in her life Lucy made the discovery that eyes can praise as well as lips. For our part, we have often thought that that discovery is an epoch in life.

It was now that Mrs. Slopperton declared her thorough conviction that the stranger himself could sing. "He had that about him," she said, "which made her sure of it."

"Indeed, dear madam," said he, with his usual undefinable, half-frank, half-latent smile, "my voice is but so-so, and my memory so indifferent, that even in the easiest passages I soon come to a stand. My best notes are in the falsetto, and as for my *execution*, — but we won't talk of *that*."

"Nay, nay; you are so modest," said Mrs. Slopperton: "I am sure you could oblige us if you would."

"Your command," said the stranger, moving to the harpsichord, "is all-sufficient: and since you, madam" (turning to Lucy), "have chosen a song after the old school, may I find pardon if I do the same? My selection is, to be sure, from a lawless song-book, and is supposed to be a ballad by Robin Hood, or, at least, one of his merry men; a very different sort of outlaws from the knaves who attacked you, sir!"

With this preface, the stranger sang to a wild yet jovial air, with a tolerable voice, the following effusion: —

THE LOVE OF OUR PROFESSION; OR, THE
ROBBER'S LIFE.

On the stream of the World, the Robber's life
Is borne on the blithest wave ;
Now it bounds into light in a gladsome strife,
Now it laughs in its hiding cave.

At his maiden's lattice he stays the rein,
How still is his courser proud !
(But still as a wind when it hangs o'er the main
In the breast of the boding cloud.)

With the champed bit and the arched crest,
And the eye of a listening deer,
Like valor, fretful most in rest,
Least chafed when in career.

Fit slave to a Lord whom all else refuse
To save at his desperate need ;
By my troth ! I think one whom the world pursues,
Hath a right to a gallant steed.

"Away, my beloved, I hear their feet!
I blow thee a kiss, my fair,
And I promise to bring thee, when next we meet,
A braid for thy bonny hair."

"Hurrah for the booty! — my steed, hurrah!
Thorough bush, thorough brake, go we ;
And the coy Moon smiles on our merry way,
Like my own love, — timidly."

The Parson he rides with a jingling pouch,
How it blabs of the rifled poor !
The Courtier he lolls in his gilded coach,
How it smacks of a sinecure !

The Lawyer revolves in his whirling chaise,
Sweet thoughts of a mischief done ;
And the Lady that knoweth the card she plays,
Is counting her guineas won !

“Ho, Lady! — What, holla, ye sinless men!
My claim ye can scarce refuse ;
For when honest folk live on their neighbors, then
They encroach on the Robber’s dues !”

The Lady changed cheek like a bashful maid,
The Lawyer talked wondrous fair,
The Parson blasphemed, and the Courtier prayed,
And the Robber bore off his share.

“Hurrah for the revel ! — my steed, hurrah !
Thorough bush, thorough brake, go we !
It is ever a virtue, when others pay,
To ruffle it merrily !”

Oh ! there never was life like the Robber’s, — so
Jolly and bold and free ;
And its end, — why, a cheer from the crowd below,
And a leap from a leafless tree !

This very moral lay being ended, Mrs. Slopperton declared it was excellent; though she confessed she thought the sentiments rather loose. Perhaps the gentleman might be induced to favor them with a song of a more refined and modern turn,— something sentimental, in short. Glancing towards Lucy, the stranger answered that he only knew one song of the kind Mrs. Slopperton specified, and it was so short, that he could scarcely weary her patience by granting her request.

At this moment, the river, which was easily descried from the windows of the room, glimmered in the starlight, and, directing his looks towards the water, as if

the scene had suggested to him the verses he sang, he gave the following stanzas in a very low, sweet tone, and with a far purer taste than perhaps would have suited the preceding and ruder song: —

THE WISH.

As sleeps the dreaming Eve below,
Its holiest star keeps ward above,
And yonder wave begins to glow,
Like Friendship brightening into Love!

Ah! would thy bosom were that stream,
Ne'er wooed save by the virgin air! —
Ah! would that I were that star, whose beam
Looks down and finds its image *there*!

Scarcely was the song ended, before the arrival of Miss Brandon's servant was announced, and her destined escort, starting up, gallantly assisted her with her cloak and her hood, — happy, no doubt, to escape, in some measure, the overwhelming compliments of his enter-tainers.

"But," said the doctor, as he shook hands with his deliverer, "by what name shall I remember and" (lifting his reverend eyes) "pray for the gentleman to whom I am so much indebted?"

"You are very kind," said the stranger; "my name is Clifford. Madam" (turning to Lucy), "may I offer my hand down the stairs?"

Lucy accepted the courtesy, and the stranger was half way down the staircase, when the doctor, stretching out his little neck, exclaimed, —

"Good evening, sir! I do hope we shall meet again."

"Fear not," said Mr. Clifford, laughing gayly, "I am too great a traveller to make that hope a matter of impossibility. Take care, madam, — one step more."

The night was calm and tolerably clear, though the moon had not yet risen, as Lucy and her companion passed through the fields, with the servant preceding them at a little distance with the lantern.

After a pause of some length, Clifford said, with a little hesitation, "Is Miss Brandon related to the celebrated barrister of her name?"

"He is my uncle," said Lucy: "do you know him?"

"Only your uncle?" said Clifford, with vivacity, and evading Lucy's question. "I feared — hem! hem! — that is, I thought he might have been a nearer relation." There was another, but a shorter pause, when Clifford resumed, in a low voice, "Will Miss Brandon think me very presumptuous if I say, that a countenance like hers, once seen, can never be forgotten; and I believe, some years since, I had the honor to see her in London, at the theatre? It was but a momentary and distant glance that I was then enabled to gain; and yet," he added significantly, "it sufficed!"

"I was only once at the theatre while in London, some years ago," said Lucy, a little embarrassed; "and, indeed, an unpleasant occurrence which happened to my uncle, with whom I was, is sufficient to make me remember it."

"Ha! — and what was it?"

"Why, in going out of the playhouse, his watch was stolen by some dexterous pickpocket."

"Was the rogue caught?" asked the stranger.

"Yes, and was sent the next day to Bridewell. My uncle said he was extremely young, and yet quite hardened. I remember that I was foolish enough, when I

heard of his sentence, to beg very hard that my uncle would intercede for him; but in vain."

"Did you, indeed, intercede for him?" said the stranger, in so earnest a tone that Lucy colored for the twentieth time that night, without seeing any necessity for the blush. Clifford continued in a gayer tone, "Well, it is surprising how rogues hang together. I should not be greatly surprised if the person who despoiled your uncle were one of the same gang as the rascal who so terrified your worthy friend the doctor. But is this handsome old place your home?"

"This is my home," answered Lucy; "but it is an old-fashioned, strange place: and few people, to whom it was not endeared by associations, would think it handsome."

"Pardon me!" said Lucy's companion, stopping, and surveying, with a look of great interest, the quaint pile, which now stood close before them; its dark bricks, gable-ends, and ivied walls, tinged by the starry light of the skies, and contrasted by the river, which rolled in silence below. The shutters to the large oriel window of the room, in which the squire usually sat, were still unclosed, and the steady and warm light of the apartment shone forth, casting a glow, even to the smooth waters of the river; at the same moment, too, the friendly bark of the house-dog was heard, as in welcome, and was followed by the note of the great bell, announcing the hour for the last meal of the old-fashioned and hospitable family.

"There is a pleasure in this!" said the stranger, unconsciously, and with a half-sigh; "I wish I had a home!"

"And have you not a home?" said Lucy, with *naïveté*.

"As much as a bachelor can have, perhaps," answered Clifford, recovering without an effort his gayety and self-possession. "But you know we wanderers are not allowed the same boast as the more fortunate Benedicts; we send our hearts in search of a home, and we lose the one without gaining the other. But I keep you in the cold, and we are now at your door."

"You will come in, of course," said Miss Brandon, "and partake of our evening cheer."

The stranger hesitated for an instant, and then said, in a quick tone, —

"No! many — many thanks; it is already late. Will Miss Brandon accept my gratitude for her condescension in permitting the attendance of one unknown to her?" As he thus spoke, Clifford bowed profoundly over the hand of his beautiful charge, and Lucy, wishing him good-night, hastened, with a light step, to her father's side.

Meanwhile Clifford, after lingering a minute, when the door was closed on him, turned abruptly away, and muttering to himself, repaired with rapid steps to whatever object he had then in view.

CHAPTER XII.

Up rouse ye then,
My merry, merry men!

JOANNA BAILLIE.

WHEN the moon rose that night, there was one spot upon which she palely broke, about ten miles distant from Warlock, which the forewarned traveller would not have been eager to pass, but which might not have afforded a bad study to such artists as have caught from the savage painter of the Apennines a love for the wild and the adventurous. Dark trees, scattered far and wide over a broken but verdant sward, made the background; the moon shimmered through the boughs as she came slowly forth from her pavilion of cloud, and poured a broader beam on two figures just advanced beyond the trees. More plainly brought into light by her rays than his companion, here a horseman, clad in a short cloak that barely covered the crupper of his steed, was looking to the priming of a large pistol which he had just taken from his holster. A slouched hat, and a mask of black crape, conspired with the action to throw a natural suspicion on the intentions of the rider. His horse, a beautiful dark gray, stood quite motionless, with arched neck and its short ears quickly moving to and fro, demonstrative of that sagacious and anticipative attention which characterizes the noblest of all tamed animals; you would not have perceived the impatience of the steed but for the white foam that gathered round the bit, and for an occasional and unfrequent toss of the

head. Behind this horseman, and partially thrown into the dark shadow of the trees, another man, similarly clad, was busied in tightening the girths of a horse of great strength and size. As he did so, he hummed, with no unmusical murmur, the air of a popular drinking song.

"'Sdeath, Ned!" said his comrade, who had for some time been plunged in a silent reverie, — "'sdeath! why can you not stifle your love for the fine arts, at a moment like this? That hum of thine grows louder every moment, at last I expect it will burst out into a full roar; recollect we are not at Gentleman George's now!"

"The more 's the pity, Augustus," answered Ned. "Soho, Little John; woaho, sir! a nice, long night like this is made on purpose for drinking. Will you, sir, keep still then!"

"'Man never is, but always to be blessed,'" said the moralizing Tomlinson; "you see, you sigh for other scenes even when you have a fine night and the chance of a godsend before you."

"Ay, the night is fine enough," said Ned, who was rather a grumbler, as, having finished his groom-like operation, he now slowly mounted. "D— it, Oliver¹ looks out as broadly as if he were going to blab. For my part, I love a *dark* night, with a star here and there winking at us, as much as to say, 'I see you, my boys, but I won't say a word about it,' and a small, pattering, drizzling, mizzling rain, that prevents Little John's hoofs being heard, and covers one's retreat, as it were. Besides, when one is a little wet, it is always necessary to drink the more, to keep the cold from one's stomach when one gets home."

"Or, in other words," said Augustus, who loved a

¹ The moon.

maxim from his very heart, "light wet cherishes heavy wet!"

"Good!" said Ned, yawning. "Hang it, I wish the captain would come. Do you know what o'clock it is? Not far short of eleven, I suppose?"

"About that!—hist, is that a carriage?—no; it is only a sudden rise in the wind."

"Very self-sufficient in Mr. Wind to allow himself to be raised without our help!" said Ned: "By the way, we are of course to go back to the Red Cave."

"So Captain Lovett says. Tell me, Ned, what do you think of the new tenant Lovett has put into the cave?"

"Oh, I have strange doubts there," answered Ned, shaking the hairy honors of his head. "I don't half like it; consider, the cave is our stronghold, and ought only to be known—"

"To men of tried virtue," interrupted Tomlinson. "I agree with you; I must try and get Lovett to discard his singular *protégé*, as the French say."

"'Gad, Augustus, how came you by so much learning? You know all the poets by heart, to say nothing of Latin and French."

"Oh, hang it, I was brought up, like the captain, to a literary way of life."

"That's what makes you so thick with him, I suppose. *He* writes (and sings too) a tolerable song, and is certainly a deuced clever fellow. What a rise in the world he has made! Do you recollect what a poor sort of way he was in when you introduced him at Gentleman George's?—and now he's the Captain Crank of the gang."

"The gang!—the company, you mean. Gang, indeed! One would think you were speaking of a knot

of pickpockets. Yes, Lovett is a clever fellow; and, thanks to me, a very decent philosopher!" It is impossible to convey to our reader the grave air of importance with which Tomlinson made his concluding laudation. "Yes," said he, after a pause, "he has a bold, plain way of viewing things, and, like Voltaire, he becomes a philosopher by being a man of sense! Hist! see my horse's ears! some one is coming, though I don't hear him! Keep watch!"

The robbers grew silent, the sound of distant hoofs was indistinctly heard, and, as it came nearer, there was a crash of boughs, as if a hedge had been ridden through; presently the moon gleamed picturesquely on the figure of a horseman, approaching through the copse in the rear of the robbers. Now he was half seen among the sinuosities of his forest path; now in full sight, now altogether hid; then his horse neighed impatiently; now he again came in sight, and in a moment more he had joined the pair!

The new-comer was of a tall and sinewy frame, and in the first bloom of manhood. A frock of dark green, edged with a narrow silver lace, and buttoned from the throat to the middle, gave due effect to an upright mien, a broad chest, and a slender but rounded waist that stood in no need of the compression of the tailor. A short riding-cloak clasped across the throat with a silver buckle, hung picturesquely over one shoulder, while his lower limbs were cased in military boots, which, though they rose above the knee, were evidently neither heavy nor embarrassing to the vigorous sinews of the horseman. The caparisons of the steed — the bit, the bridle, the saddle, the holster — were according to the most approved fashion of the day; and the steed itself was in the highest condition, and of remarkable beauty.

The horseman's air was erect and bold; a small but coal-black mustache heightened the resolute expression of his short, curved lip; and, from beneath the large hat which overhung his brow, his long locks escaped, and waved darkly in the keen night air. Altogether, horseman and horse exhibited a gallant and even a chivalrous appearance, which the hour and the scene heightened to a dramatic and romantic effect.

"Ha! Lovett."

"How are you, my merry men?" were the salutations exchanged.

"What news?" said Ned.

"Brave news! look to it. My lord and his carriage will be by in ten minutes at most."

"Have you got anything more out of the parson I frightened so gloriously?" asked Augustus.

"No; more of that hereafter. Now for our new prey!"

"Are you sure our noble friend will be so soon at hand?" said Tomlinson, patting his steed, that now pawed in excited hilarity.

"Sure! I saw him change horses; I was in the stable-yard at the time: he got out for half an hour, to eat, I fancy,—be sure that I played him a trick in the meanwhile."

"What force?" asked Ned.

"Self and servant."

"The post-boys?"

"Ay, I forgot them. Never mind, you must frighten them."

"Forwards!" cried Ned, and his horse sprang from his armed heel.

"One moment," said Lovett: "I must put on my mask,—soho, Robin, soho! Now for it,—forwards!"

As the trees rapidly disappeared behind them, the riders entered, at a hand-gallop, on a broad tract of waste land interspersed with dikes and occasionally fences of hurdles, over which their horses bounded like quadrupeds well accustomed to such exploits.

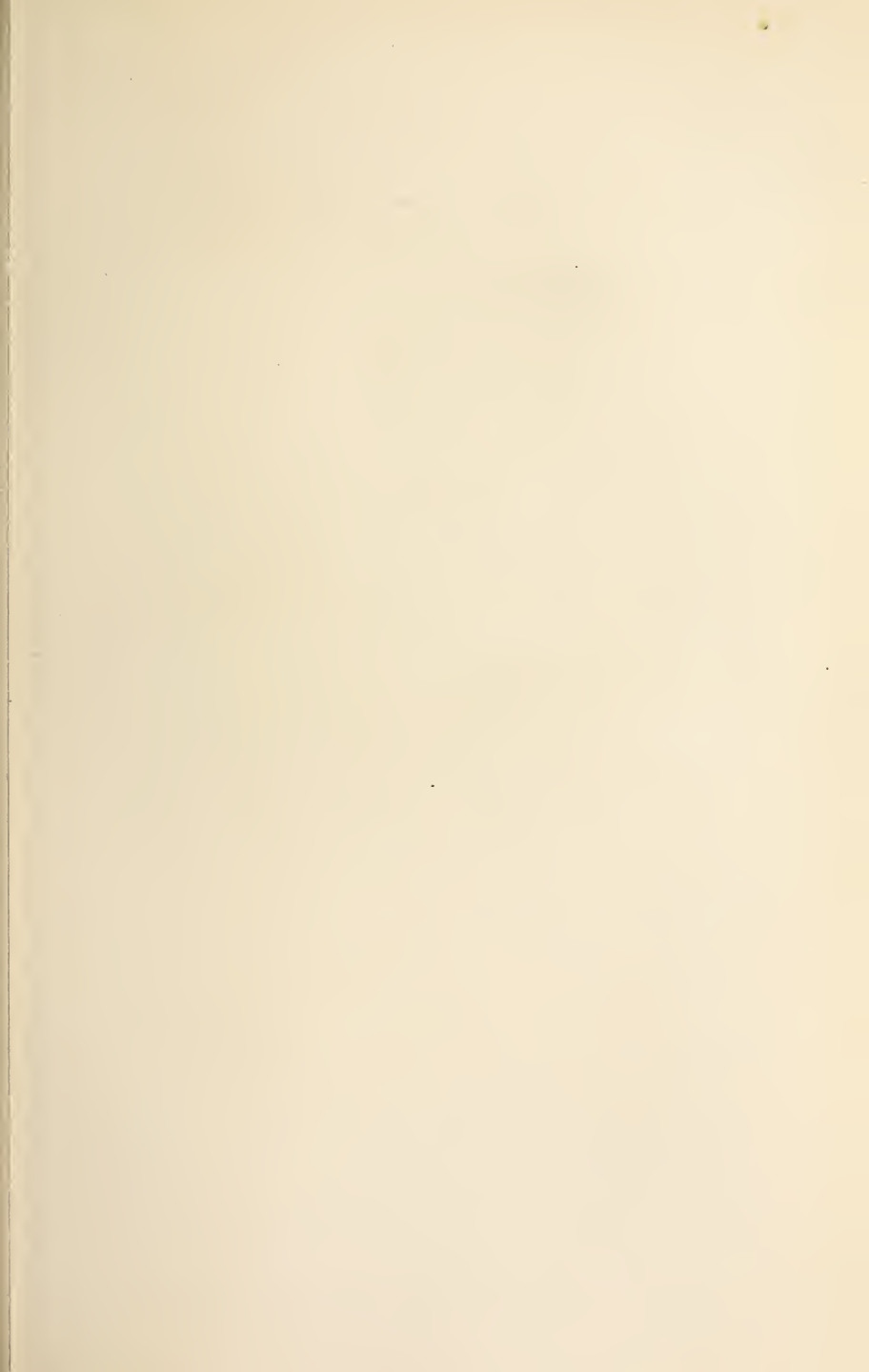
Certainly at that moment, what with the fresh air, the fitful moonlight now breaking broadly out, now lost in a rolling cloud, the exciting exercise, and that racy and dancing stir of the blood, which all action, whether evil or noble in its nature, raises in our veins; what with all this, we cannot but allow the fascination of that lawless life, — a fascination so great that one of the most noted *gentlemen highwaymen* of the day, one, too, who had received an excellent education, and mixed in no inferior society, is reported to have said, when the rope was about his neck, and the good ordinary was exhorting him to repent of his ill-spent life, "*Ill-spent, you dog! Gad!*" (smacking his lips) — "it was *delicious!*"

"Fie! fie! Mr. —, raise your thoughts to heaven!"

"But a canter across a common, — oh!" muttered the criminal; and his soul cantered off to eternity.

So briskly leaped the heart of the leader of the three that, as they now came in view of the main road, and a distant wheel of a carriage *whirred* on the ear, he threw up his right hand with a joyous gesture, and burst into a boyish exclamation of hilarity and delight.

"Whist, captain!" said Ned, checking his own spirits with a mock air of gravity, "let us conduct ourselves like gentlemen; it is only your low fellows who get into such confoundedly high spirits; men of the world like us should do everything as if their hearts were broken."





Madame de Staël.

PAUL CLIFFORD, I. 179



"Melancholy¹ ever cronies with sublimity, and courage is sublime!" said Augustus, with the pomp of a maxim-maker.

¹ A maxim which would have pleased Madame de Staël, who thought that philosophy consisted in fine sentiments. In the "Life of Lord Byron," just published by Mr. Moore, the distinguished biographer makes a similar assertion to that of the sage Augustus: "When did ever a sublime thought spring up in the soul that melancholy was not to be found, however latent, in its neighborhood?" Now, with due deference to Mr. Moore, this is a very sickly piece of nonsense, that has not even an atom of truth to stand on. "God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light!" We should like to know where lies the melancholy of that sublime sentence. "Truth," says Plato, "is the body of God, and Light is His shadow." In the name of common sense, in what possible corner, in the vicinity of that lofty image, lurks the jaundiced face of this eternal *bête noire* of Mr. Moore's? Again, in that sublimest passage in the sublimest of the Latin poets (Lucretius), which bursts forth in honor of Epicurus,¹ is there anything that speaks to us of sadness? On the contrary, in the three passages we have referred to, especially in the two first quoted, there is something splendidly luminous and cheering. Joy is often a great source of the sublime; the suddenness of its ventings would alone suffice to make it so. What can be more sublime than the triumphant Psalms of David, intoxicated as they are with an almost delirium of transport? Even in the *gloomiest* passages of the poets where we recognize sublimity, we do not often find *melancholy*. We are stricken by terror, appalled by awe, but seldom softened into sadness. In fact, melancholy rather belongs to another class of feelings than those excited by a sublime passage, or those which engender its composition. On one hand, in the loftiest flights of Homer, Milton, and Shakespeare, we will challenge a critic to discover this "green sickness" which Mr. Moore would convert into the magnificence of the plague. On the other hand, where is the evidence that melancholy made the habitual temperaments of those divine men? Of Homer we know nothing; of Shakespeare and Milton we have reason to believe the ordinary temperament was

¹ "Primus Graius homo mortaleis tollere, contra," etc. To these instances we might especially add the odes of Pindar, Horace, and Campbell.

"Now for the hedge!" cried Lovett, unheeding his comrades, and his horse sprang into the road.

The three men now were drawn up quite still and motionless by the side of the hedge. The broad road lay before them, curving out of sight on either side; the ground was hardening under an early tendency to frost, and the clear ring of approaching hoofs sounded on the ear of the robbers, ominous, haply, of the chinks of "more attractive metal" about, if hope told no flattering tale, to be their own.

constitutionally cheerful. The latter boasts of it. A thousand instances, in contradiction to an assertion it were not worth while to contradict, were it not so generally popular, so highly sanctioned, and so eminently pernicious to everything that is manly and noble in literature, rush to our memory. But we think we have already quoted enough to disprove the sentence, which the illustrious biographer has himself disproved in more than twenty passages, which *if* he is pleased to forget, we thank Heaven, posterity never will. Now we are on the subject of this *Life*, so excellent in many respects, we cannot but observe that we think the whole scope of its *philosophy* utterly unworthy of the accomplished mind of the writer; the philosophy consists of an unpardonable distorting of general truths, to suit the peculiarities of an individual, noble indeed, but proverbially morbid and eccentric. A striking instance of this occurs in the labored assertion, that poets make but sorry domestic characters. What! because Lord Byron is said to have been a bad husband, was (to go no further back for examples) — was Walter Scott a bad husband, or was Campbell; or is Mr. Moore himself? Why, in the name of justice, should it be insinuated that Milton was a bad husband, when, as far as any one can judge of the matter, it was Mrs. Milton who was the bad wife? And why, oh! why, should we be told by Mr. Moore, a man who, to judge by *Captain Rock* and the *Epicurean*, wants neither learning nor diligence, — why are we to be told, with peculiar emphasis, that Lord Bacon never married, when Lord Bacon not only married, but his marriage was so advantageous as to be an absolute epoch in his career. Really, really one begins to believe that there is not such a thing as a fact in the world!

Presently the long-expected vehicle made its appearance at the turn of the road, and it rolled rapidly on behind four fleet post-horses.

"You, Ned, with your large steed, stop the horses; you, Augustus, bully the post-boys; leave me to do the rest," said the captain.

"As agreed," returned Ned, laconically. "Now, look at me!" and the horse of the vain highwayman sprang from its shelter. So instantaneous were the operations of these experienced tacticians, that Lovett's orders were almost executed in a briefer time than it had cost him to give them.

The carriage being stopped, and the post-boys white and trembling, with two pistols (levelled by Augustus and Pepper) cocked at their heads, Lovett, dismounting, threw open the door of the carriage, and in a very civil tone, and with a very bland address, accosted the inmate.

"Do not be alarmed, my lord, you are perfectly safe; we only require your watch and purse."

"Really," answered a voice still softer than that of the robber, while a marked and somewhat *French* countenance, crowned with a fur cap, peered forth at the arrester,—"really, sir, your request is so modest that I were worse than cruel to refuse you. My purse is not very full, and you may as well have it as one of my rascally duns; but my watch I have a love for, and—"

"I understand you, my lord," interrupted the highwayman. "What do you value your watch at?"

"Humph,—to you it may be worth some twenty guineas."

"Allow me to see it!"

"Your curiosity is extremely gratifying," returned the nobleman, as with great reluctance he drew forth a gold repeater, set, as was sometimes the fashion of

that day, in precious stones. The highwayman looked slightly at the bauble.

"Your lordship," said he, with great gravity, "was too modest in your calculation, — your taste reflects greater credit on you; allow me to assure you that your watch is worth fifty guineas to us at the least. To show you that I think so most sincerely, I will either keep it, and we will say no more on the matter; or I will return it to you upon your word of honor that you will give me a check for fifty guineas payable, by your *real* bankers, to 'bearer for self.' Take your choice; it is quite immaterial to me!"

"Upon my honor, sir," said the traveller, with some surprise struggling to his features, "your coolness and self-possession are quite admirable. I see you know the world."

"Your lordship flatters me!" returned Lovett, bowing. "How do you decide?"

"Why, is it possible to write drafts without ink, pen, or paper?"

Lovett drew back, and, while he was searching in his pockets for writing implements, which he always carried about him, the traveller seized the opportunity, and suddenly snatching a pistol from the pocket of the carriage, levelled it full at the head of the robber. The traveller was an excellent and practised shot; he was almost within arm's length of his intended victim; his pistols were the envy of all his Irish friends. He pulled the trigger, — the powder flashed in the pan, and the highwayman, not even changing countenance, drew forth a small ink-bottle, and, placing a steel pen in it, handed it to the nobleman, saying, with incomparable *sang froid*, "Would you like, my lord, to try the other pistol? If so, oblige me by a quick aim, as you must

see the necessity of despatch. If not, here is the back of a letter, on which you can write the draft."

The traveller was not a man apt to become embarrassed in anything, — save his circumstances; but he certainly felt a little discomposed and confused as he took the paper, and, uttering some broken words, wrote the check. The highwayman glanced over it, saw it was written according to form, and then, with a bow of cool respect, returned the watch, and shut the door of the carriage.

Meanwhile the servant had been shivering in front, — boxed up in that solitary convenience termed, not euphoniously, a dickey. Him the robber now briefly accosted.

"What have you got about you belonging to your master?"

"Only his pills, your honor! which I forgot to put in the —"

"Pills! — throw them down to me!" The valet tremblingly extracted from his side pocket a little box, which he threw down, and Lovett caught in his hand.

He opened the box, counted the pills, —

"One, two, four, twelve, — aha!" He reopened the carriage-door.

"Are these your pills, my lord?"

The wondering peer, who had begun to resettle himself in the corner of his carriage, answered "that they were."

"My lord, I see you are in a high state of fever; you were a little delirious just now when you snapped a pistol in your friend's face. Permit me to recommend you a prescription, — swallow off all these pills!"

"My God!" cried the traveller, startled into earnestness: "What do you mean? — twelve of those pills would kill a man!"

"Hear him!" said the robber, appealing to his comrades, who roared with laughter. "What, my lord, would you rebel against your doctor? Fie, fie! be persuaded."

And with a soothing gesture he stretched the pill-box towards the recoiling nose of the traveller. But though a man who could as well as any one make the best of a bad condition, the traveller was especially careful of his health; and so obstinate was he where that was concerned, that he would rather have submitted to the effectual operation of a bullet, than incurred the chance operation of an extra pill. He, therefore, with great indignation, as the box was still extended towards him, snatched it from the hand of the robber, and, flinging it across the road, said, with dignity, —

"Do your worst, rascals! But, if you leave me alive, you shall repent the outrage you have offered to one of his Majesty's household!" Then, as if becoming sensible of the ridicule of affecting too much in his present situation, he added, in an altered tone: "And now, for Heaven's sake, shut the door; and if you must kill somebody, there's my servant on the box, — he's paid for it."

This speech made the robbers laugh more than ever; and Lovett, who liked a joke even better than a purse, immediately closed the carriage-door, saying, —

"Adieu! my lord; and let me give you a piece of advice: whenever you get out at a country inn, and stay half an hour while your horses are changing, take your pistols with you, or you may chance to have the charge drawn."

With this admonition the robber withdrew; and seeing that the valet held out to him a long, green purse, he said, gently shaking his head, —

"Rogues should not prey on each other, my good fellow. You rob your master, — so do we: let each keep what he has got."

Long Ned and Tomlinson then backing their horses, the carriage was freed; and away started the post-boys at a pace which seemed to show less regard for life than the robbers themselves had evinced.

Meanwhile the captain remounted his steed, and the three confederates, bounding in gallant style over the hedge through which they had previously gained the road, galloped off in the same direction they had come: the moon ever and anon bringing into light their flying figures, and the sound of many a joyous peal of laughter ringing through the distance along the frosty air.

CHAPTER XIII.

What is here? —

Gold ?
Thus much of this will make black white, — foul fair.

Timon of Athens.

Came there a certain lord, neat, trimly dressed,
Fresh as a bridegroom.

Henry IV.

I do not know the man I should avoid
So soon as that spare Cassius! He reads much.
He is a great observer; and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men.
Often he smiles; *but* smiles in such a sort,
As if he mocked himself or scorned his spirit,
That could be moved to smile at anything.

Julius Cæsar.

THE next day, late at noon, as Lucy was sitting with her father, not as usual engaged either in work or in reading, but seemingly quite idle, with her pretty foot upon the squire's gouty stool, and her eyes fixed on the carpet, while her hands (never were hands so soft and so small as Lucy's, though they may have been eclipsed in whiteness) were lightly clasped together and reposed listlessly on her knees, — the surgeon of the village abruptly entered with a face full of news and horror. Old Squire Brandon was one of those persons who always hear news, whatever it may be, later than any of their neighbors; and it was not till all the gossips of the neighborhood had picked the bone of the matter quite bare, that he was now informed, through the medium of Mr. Pillum, that Lord Mauleverer had on

the preceding night been stopped by three highwaymen in his road to his country seat, and robbed to a considerable amount.

The fame of the worthy Doctor Sloperton's maladventure having, long ere this, been spread far and wide, the whole neighborhood was naturally thrown into great consternation. Magistrates were sent to, large dogs borrowed, blunderbusses cleaned, and a subscription made throughout the parish for the raising of a patrol. There seemed little doubt but that the offenders, in either case, were members of the same horde; and Mr. Pillum, in his own mind, was perfectly convinced that they meant to encroach upon his trade, and destroy all the surrounding householders who were worth the trouble.

The next week passed in the most diligent endeavors, on the part of the neighboring magistrates and yeomanry, to detect and seize the robbers, but their labors were utterly fruitless; and one justice of peace, who had been particularly active, was himself entirely "cleaned out" by an old gentleman, who, under the name of Mr. Bagshot, — rather an ominous cognomen, — offered to conduct the unsuspecting magistrate to the very spot where the miscreants might be seized. No sooner, however, had he drawn the poor justice away from his comrades into a lonely part of the road, than he stripped him to his shirt. He did not even leave his worship his flannel drawers, though the weather was as bitter as the dog-days of eighteen hundred and twenty-nine.

"'Tis not my way," said the hoary ruffian, when the justice petitioned at least for the latter article of attire, — "'tis not my way: — I be's slow about my work, but I does it thoroughly, — so off with your rags, old un."

This was, however, the only additional instance of aggression in the vicinity of Warlock Manor House; and, by degrees, as the autumn declined, and no further enormities were perpetrated, people began to look out for a new topic of conversation. This was afforded them by a piece of unexpected good fortune to Lucy Brandon.

Mrs. Warner, an old lady to whom she was slightly related, and with whom she had been residing during her brief and only visit to London, died suddenly, and in her will declared Lucy to be her sole heiress. The property, which was in the funds, and which amounted to sixty thousand pounds, was to be enjoyed by Miss Brandon immediately on her attaining her twenty-first year; meanwhile the executors to the will were to pay to the young heiress the annual sum of six hundred pounds. The joy which this news created in Warlock Manor House may easily be conceived. The squire projected improvements here, and repairs there; and Lucy, poor girl, who had no idea of money for herself, beyond the purchase of a new pony, or a gown from London, seconded with affectionate pleasure all her father's suggestions, and delighted herself with the reflection that those fine plans, which were to make the Brandons greater than the Brandons ever were before, were to be realized by her own, own money! It was at this identical time that the surrounding gentry made a simultaneous and grand discovery, — namely, of the astonishing merits and great good sense of Mr. Joseph Brandon. It was a pity, they observed, that he was of so reserved and shy a turn, — it was not becoming in a gentleman of so ancient a family. But why should they not endeavor to draw him from his retirement into those more public scenes which he was doubtless well calculated to adorn?

Accordingly, as soon as the first month of mourning had expired, several coaches, chariots, chaises, and horses, which had never been seen at Warlock Manor House before, arrived there one after the other in the most friendly manner imaginable. Their owners admired everything, — the house was such a fine relic of old times! — for their parts they liked an oak staircase! — and those nice old windows! — and what a beautiful peacock! — and, Heaven save the mark! that magnificent chestnut-tree was worth a forest! — Mr. Brandon was requested to make one of the county hunt, not that he any longer hunted himself, but that his name would give such consequence to the thing! — Miss Lucy must come to pass a week with her dear friends the Honorable Misses Sansterre! — Augustus, their brother, had *such* a sweet lady's horse! In short, the customary change which takes place in people's characters after the acquisition of a fortune, took place in the characters of Mr. and Miss Brandon; and when people become suddenly amiable, it is no wonder that they should suddenly gain a vast accession of friends.

But Lucy, though she had seen so little of the world, was not quite blind; and the squire, though rather obtuse, was not quite a fool. If they were not rude to their new visitors, they were by no means overpowered with gratitude at their condescension. Mr. Brandon declined subscribing to the hunt, and Miss Lucy laughed in the face of the Honorable Augustus Sansterre. Among their new guests, however, was one who to great knowledge of the world joined an extreme and even brilliant polish of manners, which at least prevented deceit from being disagreeable, if not wholly from being unseen: this was the new lieutenant of the county, Lord Mauleverer.

Though possessed of an immense property in that district, Lord Mauleverer had hitherto resided but little on his estates. He was one of those gay lords who are now somewhat uncommon in this country after mature manhood is attained, who live an easy and rakish life, rather among their parasites than their equals, and who yet, by aid of an agreeable manner, natural talents, and a certain graceful and light cultivation of mind (not the less pleasant for its being universally colored with worldliness, and an amusing rather than offensive regard for self), never lose their legitimate station in society; who are oracles in dress, equipages, cookery, and beauty, and, having no character of their own, are able to fix by a single word a character upon any one else. Thus, while Mauleverer rather lived the dissolute life of a young nobleman, who prefers the company of agreeable demireps to that of wearisome duchesses, than maintained the decorous state befitting a mature age, and an immense interest in the country, — he was quite as popular at court, where he held a situation in the household, as he was in the green-room, where he enchanted every actress on the right side of forty. A word from him in the legitimate quarters of power went farther than a harangue from another; and even the prudes — at least, all those who had daughters — confessed “that his lordship was a very interesting character.” Like Brandon, his familiar friend, he had risen in the world (from the Irish baron to the English earl) without having ever changed his politics, which were ultra-Tory; and we need not observe that he was deemed, like Brandon, a model of public integrity. He was possessed of two places under government, six votes in the House of Commons, and eight livings in the church: and we must add, in justice to his loyal and religious principles,

that there was not in the three kingdoms a firmer friend to the existing establishments.

Whenever a nobleman does not marry, people try to take away his character. Lord Mauleverer had never married; the Whigs had been very bitter on the subject: they even alluded to it in the House of Commons, that chaste assembly, where the never-failing subject of reproach against Mr. Pitt was the not being of an amorous temperament; but they had not hitherto prevailed against the stout earl's celibacy. It is true, that if he was devoid of a wife, he had secured to himself plenty of substitutes: his profession was that of a man of gallantry; and though he avoided the daughters, it was only to make love to the mothers. But his lordship had now attained a certain age, and it was at last circulated among his friends that he intended to look out for a Lady Mauleverer.

"Spare your caresses," said his toady-in-chief to a certain duchess, who had three portionless daughters, — "Mauleverer has sworn that he will not choose among your order: you know his high politics, and you will not wonder at his declaring himself averse in matrimony as in morals, *to a community of goods.*"

The announcement of the earl's matrimonial design, and the circulation of this anecdote, set all the clergymen's daughters in England on a blaze of expectation; and when Mauleverer came to —shire, upon obtaining the honor of the lieutenancy, to visit his estates and court the friendship of his neighbors, there was not an old-young lady of forty, who worked in broad-stitch and had never been to London above a week at a time, who did not deem herself exactly the sort of person sure to fascinate his lordship.

It was late in the afternoon when the travelling-

chariot of this distinguished person, preceded by two outriders in the earl's undress livery of dark green, stopped at the hall-door of Warlock House. The squire was at home, actually and metaphorically; for he never dreamed of denying himself to any one, gentle or simple. The door of the carriage being opened, there descended a small, slight man, richly dressed (for lace and silk vestments were not then quite discarded, though gradually growing less the mode), and of an air prepossessing, and *distinguished*, rather than *dignified*. His years — for his countenance, though handsome, was deeply marked, and evinced the tokens of dissipation — seemed more numerous than they really were; and, though not actually past middle age, Lord Mauleverer might fairly have received the unpleasing epithet of elderly. However, his step was firm, his gait upright, and his figure was considerably more youthful than his physiognomy. The first compliments of the day having passed, and Lord Mauleverer having expressed his concern that his long and frequent absence from the county had hitherto prevented his making the acquaintance of Mr. Brandon, the brother of one of his oldest and most esteemed friends, conversation became on both sides rather an effort. Mr. Brandon first introduced the subject of the weather and the turnips; inquired whether his lordship was not very fond (for his part he used to be, but lately the rheumatism had disabled him, — he hoped his lordship was not subject to *that complaint*) of shooting!

Catching only the last words, — for, besides the awful complexity of the squire's sentences, Mauleverer was slightly afflicted by the aristocratic complaint of deafness, — the earl answered, with a smile, —

“The complaint of shooting! — very good, indeed,

Mr. Brandon; it is seldom that I have heard so witty a phrase. No, I am not in the least troubled with that epidemic. It is a disorder very prevalent in this county."

"My lord!" said the squire, rather puzzled, — and then observing that Mauleverer did not continue, he thought it expedient to start another subject.

"I was exceedingly grieved to hear that your lordship, in travelling to Mauleverer Park (that is a very ugly road across the waste land; the roads in this county are in general pretty good; for my own part, when I was a magistrate I was very strict in that respect), was robbed. You have not yet, I believe, detected (for my part, though I do not profess to be much of a politician, I do think that in affairs of robbery there is a great deal of remissness in *the ministers*) *the villains*?"

"Our friend is disaffected!" thought the lord-lieutenant, imagining the last opprobrious term was applied to the respectable personages specified in the parenthesis. Bowing with a polished smile to the squire, Mauleverer replied aloud, that he was extremely sorry that their conduct (meaning the ministers) did not meet with Mr. Brandon's approbation.

"Well," thought the squire, "that is playing the courtier with a vengeance! — Meet with my approbation!" said he, warmly. "How could your lordship think me (for though I am none of your saints, I am, I hope, a good Christian; an excellent one, judging from your words, *your lordship must be!*) *so partial to crime*?"

"*I partial to crime!*" returned Mauleverer, thinking he had stumbled unawares on some outrageous democrat, yet smiling as softly as usual; "you judge me harshly,

Mr. Brandon! you must do me more justice, and you can only do that by knowing me better."

Whatever unlucky answer the squire might otherwise have made, was cut off by the entrance of Lucy; and the earl, secretly delighted at the interruption, rose to render her his homage, and to remind her of the introduction he had formerly been so happy as to obtain to her through the friendship of Mr. William Brandon, — "a friendship," said the gallant nobleman, "to which I have often before been indebted, but which was never more agreeably exerted on my behalf."

Upon this, Lucy, who, though she had been so painfully bashful during her meeting with Mr. Clifford, felt no overpowering diffidence in the presence of so much greater a person, replied laughingly, and the earl rejoined by a second compliment. Conversation was now no longer an effort; and Mauleverer, the most consummate of epicures, whom even royalty trembled to ask without preparation, on being invited by the unconscious squire to partake of the family dinner, eagerly accepted the invitation. It was long since the knightly walls of Warlock had been honored by the presence of a guest so courtly. The good squire heaped his plate with a profusion of boiled beef; and while the poor earl was contemplating in dismay the alps upon alps which he was expected to devour, the gray-headed butler, anxious to serve him with alacrity, whipped away the overloaded plate, and presently returned it, yet more astoundingly surcharged with an additional world of a composition of stony color and sudorific aspect, which, after examining in mute attention for some moments, and carefully removing as well as he was able, to the extreme edge of his plate, the earl discovered to be suet-pudding.

"You eat nothing, my lord," cried the squire; "let me give you (this is more underdone)," holding between blade and fork in middle air a horrent fragment of scarlet, shaking its gory locks, — "another slice."

Swift at the word dropped upon Mauleverer's plate the harpy finger and ruthless thumb of the gray-headed butler.

"Not a morsel more," cried the earl, struggling with the murderous domestic. "My dear sir, excuse me; I assure you I have never ate such a dinner before, — never!"

"Nay, now!" quoth the squire, expostulating, "you really (and this air is so keen that your lordship should indulge your appetite, *if you follow the physician's advice*) eat nothing!"

Again Mauleverer was at fault.

"The physicians are right, Mr. Brandon," said he, — "very right; and I am forced to live abstemiously: indeed, I do not know whether, if I were to exceed at your hospitable table, and attack all that you would bestow upon me, I should ever recover it. You would have to seek a new lieutenant for your charming county, and, on the tomb of the last Mauleverer, the hypocritical and unrelated heir would inscribe, 'Died of the visitation of Beef, John, Earl, etc.'"

Plain as the meaning of this speech might have seemed to others, the squire only laughed at the effeminate appetite of the speaker, and inclined to think him an excellent fellow for jesting so good-humoredly on his own physical infirmity. But Lucy had the tact of her sex, and, taking pity on the earl's calamitous situation, though she certainly never guessed at its extent, entered with so much grace and ease into the conversation which he sought to establish between them, that Mauleverer's

gentleman, who had hitherto been pushed aside by the zeal of the gray-headed butler, found an opportunity, when the squire was laughing and the butler staring, to steal away the overburdened plate, unsuspected and unseen.

In spite, however, of these evils of board and lodgment, Mauleverer was exceedingly well pleased with his visit; nor did he terminate till the shades of night had begun to close, and the distance from his own residence conspired with experience to remind him that it was possible for a highwayman's audacity to attack the equipage even of Lord Mauleverer. He then reluctantly re-entered his carriage, and, bidding the postilions drive as fast as possible, wrapped himself in his *roquelaire*, and divided his thoughts between Lucy Brandon and the *homard au gratin* with which he purposed to console himself immediately on his return home. However, fate, which mocks our most cherished hopes, ordained that on arriving at Mauleverer Park, the owner should be suddenly afflicted with a loss of appetite, a coldness in the limbs, a pain in the chest, and various other ungracious symptoms of portending malady. Lord Mauleverer went straight to bed; he remained there for some days, and when he recovered, his physicians ordered him to Bath. The Whig Methodists, who hated him, ascribed his illness to Providence; and his lordship was firmly of opinion that it should be ascribed to the beef and pudding. However this be, there was an end for the present to the hopes of young ladies of forty, and to the intended festivities at Mauleverer Park. "Good Heavens!" said the earl, as his carriage-wheels turned from his gates, "what a loss to country tradesmen may be occasioned by a piece of underdone beef, especially if it be boiled!"

About a fortnight had elapsed since Mauleverer's meteoric visit to Warlock House, when the squire received from his brother the following epistle:—

MY DEAR JOSEPH,—You know my numerous avocations, and, amid the press of business which surrounds me, will, I am sure, forgive me for being a very negligent and remiss correspondent. Nevertheless, I assure you, no one can more sincerely sympathize in that good fortune which has befallen my charming niece, and of which your last letter informed me, than I do. Pray give my best love to her, and tell her how complacently I look forward to the brilliant sensation she will create, when her beauty is enthroned upon that rank which, I am quite sure, it will one day or other command.

You are not aware, perhaps, my dear Joseph, that I have for some time been in a very weak and declining state of health. The old nervous complaint in my face has of late attacked me grievously, and the anguish is sometimes so great that I am scarcely able to bear it. I believe the great demand which my profession makes upon a frame of body never strong, and now beginning prematurely to feel the infirmities of time, is the real cause of my maladies. At last, however, I must absolutely punish my pocket, and indulge my inclinations by a short respite from toil. The doctors—sworn friends, you know, to the lawyers, since they make common cause against mankind—have peremptorily ordered me to lie by, and to try a short course of air, exercise, social amusements, and the waters of Bath. Fortunately this is vacation time, and I can afford to lose a few weeks of emolument, in order, perhaps, to secure many years of life. I purpose, then, early next week, repairing to that melancholy reservoir of the gay, where persons dance out of life and are fiddled across the Styx. In a word, I shall make one of the adventurers after health, who seek the goddess at King Bladud's pump-room. Will you and dear Lucy join me there? I ask it of your friendship, and I am quite sure that neither of you will shrink aghast at the proposal of solacing your invalid relation. At the same time that I am recovering health, my pretty niece will be avenging

Pluto, by consigning to his dominions many a better and younger hero in my stead. And it will be a double pleasure to me to see all the hearts, etc. — I break off, for what can I say on that subject which the little coquette does not anticipate? It is high time that Lucy should see the world; and, though there are many at Bath, above all places, to whom the heiress will be an object of interested attentions, yet there are also many in that crowded city by no means undeserving her notice. What say you, dear Joseph? But I know already; you will not refuse to keep company with me in my little holiday, and Lucy's eyes are already sparkling at the idea of new bonnets, Milsom Street, a thousand adorers, and the Pump-room. — Ever, dear Joseph, yours affectionately,

WILLIAM BRANDON.

P. S. — I find that my friend Lord Mauleverer is at Bath; I own that is an additional reason to take me thither; by a letter from him, received the other day, I see that he has paid you a visit, and he now raves about his host and the heiress. Ah, Miss Lucy, Miss Lucy! are you going to conquer him whom all London has, for years more than I care to tell (yet not many, for Mauleverer is still young), assailed in vain? Answer me!

This letter created a considerable excitement in Warlock House. The old squire was extremely fond of his brother, and grieved to the heart to find that he spoke so discouragingly of his health. Nor did the squire for a moment hesitate at accepting the proposal to join his distinguished relative at Bath. Lucy also — who had for her uncle, possibly from his profuse yet not indelicate flattery, a very great regard and interest, though she had seen but little of him — urged the squire to lose no time in arranging matters for their departure, so as to precede the barrister, and prepare everything for his arrival. The father and daughter being thus agreed, there was little occasion for delay;

an answer to the invalid's letter was sent by return of post; and on the fourth day from their receipt of the said epistle, the good old squire, his daughter, a country girl by way of abigail, the gray-headed butler, and two or three live pets, of the size and habits most convenient for travelling, were on their way to a city which at that time was gayer, at least, if somewhat less splendid than the metropolis.

On the second day of their arrival at Bath, Brandon (as in future, to avoid confusion, we shall call the younger brother, giving to the elder his patriarchal title of squire) joined them.

He was a man seemingly rather fond of parade, though at heart he disrelished and despised it. He came to their lodging, which had not been selected in the very best part of the town, in a carriage and six, but attended only by one favorite servant.

They found him in better looks and better spirits than they had anticipated. Few persons, when he liked it, could be more agreeable than William Brandon; but at times there mixed with his conversation a bitter sarcasm, probably a habit acquired in his profession, or an occasional tinge of morose and haughty sadness, possibly the consequence of his ill-health. Yet his disorder, which was somewhat approaching to that painful affliction the *tic doloireux*, though of fits more rare in occurrence than those of that complaint ordinarily are, never seemed even for an instant to operate upon his mood, whatever that might be. That disease worked unseen: not a muscle of his face appeared to quiver; the smile never vanished from his mouth; the blandness of his voice never grew faint as with pain,—and, in the midst of intense torture, his resolute and stern mind conquered every external indication; nor

could the most observant stranger have noted the moment when the fit attacked or released him. There was something inscrutable about the man. You felt that you took his character upon trust, and not on your own knowledge. The acquaintance of years would have left you equally dark as to his vices or his virtues. He varied often, yet in each variation he was equally undiscoverable. Was he performing a series of parts, or was it the ordinary changes of a man's true temperament that you beheld in him? Commonly smooth, quiet, attentive, flattering in social intercourse, he was known in the senate and courts of law for a cold asperity and a caustic venom, scarcely rivalled even in those arenas of contention. It seemed as if the bitterer feelings he checked in private life, he delighted to indulge in public. Yet, even there, he gave not way to momentary petulance or gushing passion; all seemed with him systematic sarcasm, or habitual sternness. He outraged no form of ceremonial or of society. He stung without appearing conscious of the sting; and his antagonist writhed not more beneath the torture of his satire than the crushing contempt of his self-command. Cool, ready, armed and defended on all points, sound in knowledge, unfailing in observation, equally consummate in sophistry when needed by himself, and instantaneous in detecting sophistry in another; scorning no art, however painful, begrudging no labor, however weighty, minute in detail, yet not the less comprehending the whole subject in a grasp: such was the legal and public character William Brandon had established, and such was the fame he joined to the unsullied purity of his moral reputation. But to his friends he seemed only the agreeable, clever, lively, and, if we may use the phrase *innocently*, the

worldly man, — never affecting a superior sanctity, or an over-anxiety to forms, except upon great occasions; and rendering his austerity of manners the more admired, because he made it seem so unaccompanied by hypocrisy.

"Well," said Brandon, as he sat after dinner alone with his relations, and had seen the eyes of his brother close in diurnal slumber, — "tell me, Miss Lucy, what you think of Lord Mauleverer; do you find him agreeable?"

"Very; too much so, indeed!"

"Too much so! that is an uncommon fault, Lucy; unless you mean to insinuate that you find him too agreeable for your peace of mind."

"Oh, no! there is little fear of that. All that I meant to express was, that he seems to make it the sole business of his life to be agreeable; and that one imagines he had gained that end by the loss of certain qualities which one would have liked better."

"Umph! and what are they?"

"Truth, sincerity, independence, and honesty of mind."

"My dear Lucy, it has been the professional study of my life to discover a man's character, especially so far as truth is concerned, in as short a time as possible; but you excel me by intuition if you can tell whether there be sincerity in a courtier's character at the first interview you have with him."

"Nevertheless, I am sure of my opinion," said Lucy, laughing; "and I will tell you one instance I observed among a hundred. Lord Mauleverer is rather deaf, and he imagined, in conversation, that my father said one thing — it was upon a very trifling subject: the speech of some member of Parliament" (the lawyer smiled)

—“when in reality he meant to say another. Lord Mauleverer, in the warmest manner in the world, chimed in with him, appeared thoroughly of his opinion, applauded his sentiments, and wished the whole country of his mind. Suddenly my father spoke, Lord Mauleverer bent down his ear, and found that the sentiments he had so lauded were exactly those my father the least favored. No sooner did he make this discovery, than he wheeled round again, dexterously and gracefully, I allow, — condemned all that he had before extolled, and extolled all that he had before abused!”

“And is that all, Lucy?” said Brandon, with a keener sneer on his lip than the occasion warranted. “Why, that is what every one does: only some more gravely than others. Mauleverer in society; I, at the bar; the minister in Parliament; friend to friend; lover to mistress; mistress to lover, — half of us are employed in saying white is black, and the other half in swearing that black is white. There is only one difference, my pretty niece, between the clever man and the fool: the fool says what is false while the colors stare in his face and give him the lie; but the clever man takes, as it were, a brush, and literally turns the black into white, and the white into black, before he makes the assertion, which is *then true*. The fool changes, and is a liar; the clever man makes the colors change, and is a genius. But this is not for your young years yet, Lucy.”

“But I can’t see the necessity of seeming to agree with people,” said Lucy, simply; “surely they would be just as well pleased if you differed from them civilly and with respect?”

“No, Lucy,” said Brandon, still sneering; “to be liked, it is not necessary to be anything but compliant:

lie, cheat, make every word a snare, and every act a forgery, — but never contradict. Agree with people, and they make a couch for you in their hearts. You know the story of Dante and the buffoon. Both were entertained at the court of the vain pedant, who called himself Prince Scaliger: the former poorly, the latter sumptuously. ‘How comes it,’ said the buffoon to the poet, ‘that I am so rich and you so poor?’ ‘I shall be as rich as you,’ was the stinging and true reply, ‘whenever I can find a patron as like myself as Prince Scaliger is like you!’ ”

“Yet my birds,” said Lucy, caressing the goldfinch, which nestled to her bosom, “are not like me, and I love them. Nay, I often think I could love those better who differ from me the most. I feel it so in books: when, for instance, I read a novel or a play; and you, uncle, I like almost in proportion to my perceiving in myself nothing in common with you.”

“Yes,” said Brandon, “you have in common with me a love for old stories of Sir Hugo, and Sir Rupert, and all the other ‘Sirs’ of our mouldered and bygone race. So you shall sing me the ballad about Sir John de Brandon, and the dragon he slew in the Holy Land. We will adjourn to the drawing-room, not to disturb your father.”

Lucy agreed, took her uncle’s arm, repaired to the drawing-room, and, seating herself at the harpsichord, sang to an inspiriting, yet somewhat rude air, the family ballad her uncle had demanded.

It would have been amusing to note in the rigid face of the hardened and habitual man of peace and parchments, a certain enthusiasm which ever and anon crossed his cheek, as the verses of the ballad rested on some allusion to the knightly house of Brandon, and its old

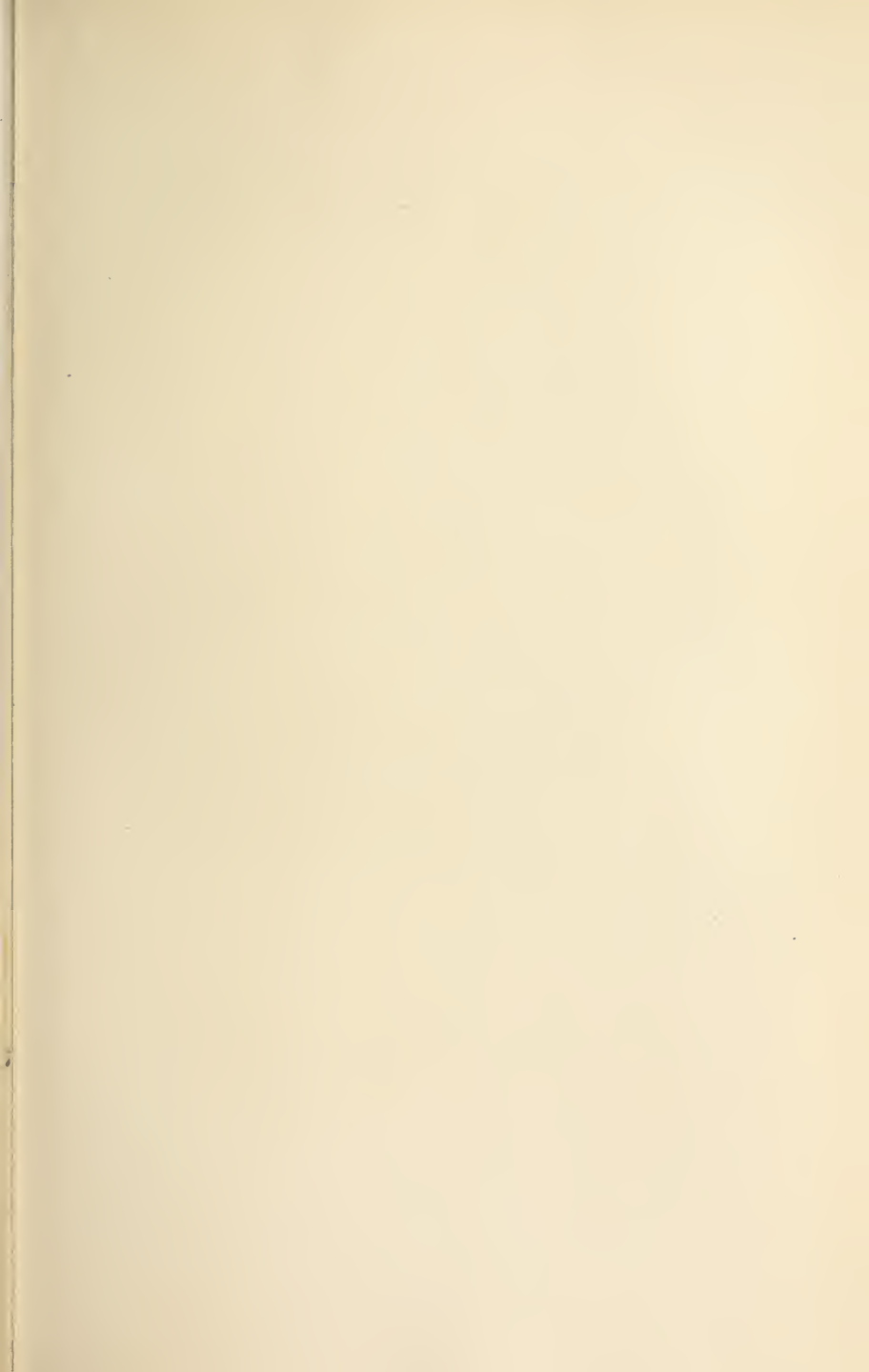
renown. It was an early prejudice, breaking out despite of himself, — a flash of character, stricken from the hard fossil in which it was imbedded. One would have supposed that the silliest of all prides (for the pride of money, though meaner, is less senseless), family pride, was the last weakness which, at that time, the callous and astute lawyer would have confessed, even to himself.

"Lucy," said Brandon, as the song ceased, and he gazed on his beautiful niece with a certain pride in his aspect, "I long to witness your first appearance in the world. This lodging, my dear, is not fit — but pardon me! what I was about to say is this: your father and yourself are here at my invitation, and in my house you must dwell; you are my guests, not mine host and hostess. I have, therefore, already directed my servant to secure me a house, and provide the necessary establishment; and I make no doubt, as he is a quick fellow, that within three days all will be ready. You must then be the magnet of my abode, Lucy; and meanwhile you must explain this to my brother, and — for you know his jealous hospitality — obtain his acquiescence."

"But —" began Lucy.

"But me no buts," said Brandon, quickly, but with an affectionate tone of wilfulness; "and now, as I feel very much fatigued with my journey, you must allow me to seek my own room."

"I will conduct you to it myself," said Lucy, for she was anxious to show her father's brother the care and forethought which she had lavished on her arrangements for his comfort. Brandon followed her into an apartment, which his eye knew at a glance had been subjected to that female superintendence which makes such uses from what men reject as insignificant; and he thanked her, with more than his usual amenity, for





*“ ‘And now let me consider what next step I shall
take for myself, — ay — only myself.’ ”*

Drawn by H. Hirschauer.

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the grace which had presided over, and the kindness which had dictated her preparations. As soon as he was left alone, he wheeled his arm-chair near the clear, bright fire, and, resting his face upon his hand, in the attitude of a man who prepares himself, as it were, for the indulgence of meditation, he muttered:—

“Yes! these women are, first, what nature makes them, and that is good; next what *we* make them, and that is evil! Now, could I persuade myself that we ought to be nice as to the use we put these poor puppets to, I should shrink from enforcing the destiny which I have marked for this girl. But that is a pitiful consideration, and he is but a silly player who loses his money for the sake of preserving his counters. So the young lady must go as another score to the fortunes of William Brandon. After all, who suffers?—not she. She will have wealth, rank, honor: *I* shall suffer, to yield so pretty and pure a gem to the coronet of—faugh! How I despise that dog! but how I could hate, crush, mangle him, could I believe that he despised me! Could he do so? Umph! No, I have resolved myself, that is impossible. Well, let me hope *that* matrimonial point will be settled; and now, let me consider what next step I shall take for myself—myself!—ay, —only myself!—with me perishes the last male of Brandon. But the light shall not go out under a bushel.”

As he said this, the soliloquist sank into a more absorbed and a silent reverie, from which he was disturbed by the entrance of his servant. Brandon, who was never a dreamer save when alone, broke at once from his reflections.

“You have obeyed my orders, Barlow?” said he.

“Yes, sir,” answered the domestic. “I have taken

the best house yet unoccupied, and when Mrs. Roberts " (Brandon's housekeeper) " arrives from London, everything will, I trust, be exactly to your wishes."

" Good! And you gave my note to Lord Mauleverer? "

" With my own hands, sir; his lordship will await you at home all to-morrow."

" Very well! and now, Barlow, see that your room is within call " (bells, though known, were not common at that day), " and give out that I am gone to bed, and must not be disturbed. What's the hour? "

" Just on the stroke of ten, sir."

" Place on that table my letter-case and the ink-stand. Look in, to help me to undress, at half-past one; I shall go to bed at that hour. And — stay, — be sure, Barlow, that my brother believes me retired for the night. He does not know my habits, and will vex himself if he thinks I sit up so late in my present state of health."

Drawing the table with its writing appurtenances near to his master, the servant left Brandon once more to his thoughts or his occupations.

CHAPTER XIV.

Servant. Get away, I say, wid dat nasty bell.

Punch. Do you call this a bell? (*Patting it.*) It is an organ.

Servant. I say it is a bell,—a nasty bell!

Punch. I say it is an organ (*striking him with it*).—What do you say it is now?

Servant. An organ, Mr. Punch!

The Tragical Comedy of Punch and Judy.

THE next morning before Lucy and her father had left their apartments, Brandon, who was a remarkably early riser, had disturbed the luxurious Mauleverer in his first slumber. Although the courtier possessed a villa some miles from Bath, he preferred a lodging in the town, both as being warmer than a rarely-inhabited country-house, and as being, to an indolent man, more immediately convenient for the gayeties and the waters of the medicinal city.

As soon as the earl had rubbed his eyes, stretched himself, and prepared himself for the untimely colloquy, Brandon poured forth his excuses for the hour he had chosen for a visit.

"Mention it not, my dear Brandon," said the good-natured nobleman, with a sigh; "I am glad at any hour to see you, and I am very sure that what you have to communicate is always worth listening to."

"It was only upon public business, though of rather a more important description than usual, that I ventured to disturb you," answered Brandon, seating himself on a chair by the bedside. "This morning, an hour ago, I received by private express a letter from

London, stating that a new arrangement will positively be made in the cabinet, — nay, naming the very promotions and changes. I confess, that as my name occurred, as also your own, in these nominations, I was anxious to have the benefit of your necessarily accurate knowledge on the subject, as well as of your advice.”

“Really, Brandon,” said Mauleverer, with a half-peevish smile, “any other hour in the day would have done for ‘the business of the nation,’ as the newspapers call that troublesome farce we go through; and I had imagined you would not have broken my nightly slumbers, except for something of real importance, — the discovery of a new beauty, or the invention of a new dish.”

“Neither the one nor the other could you have expected from *me*, my dear lord,” rejoined Brandon. “You know the dry trifles in which a lawyer’s life wastes itself away; and beauties and dishes have no attraction for us, except the former be damsels deserted, and the latter patents invaded. But my news, after all, is worth hearing, unless you have heard it before.”

“Not I! but I suppose I shall hear it in the course of the day: pray Heaven I be not sent for to attend some plague of a council. Begin!”

“In the first place, Lord Duberly resolves to resign, unless this negotiation for peace be made a cabinet question.”

“Pshaw! let him resign. I have opposed the peace so long, that it is out of the question. Of course, Lord Wanstead will not think of it, and he may count on my boroughs. A peace! shameful, disgraceful, dastardly proposition!”

“But, my dear lord, my letter says that this unexpected firmness on the part of Lord Duberly has pro-

duced so great a sensation, that, seeing the impossibility of forming a durable cabinet without him, the king has consented to the negotiation, and Duberly stays in!"

"The devil! — what next?"

"Raffden and Sternhold go out in favor of Baldwin and Charlton, and in the hope that you will lend your aid to —"

"I!" said Lord Mauleverer, very angrily, — "I lend my aid to Baldwin the Jacobin, and Charlton the son of a brewer!"

"Very true!" continued Brandon. "But in the hope that you might be persuaded to regard the new arrangements with an indulgent eye, you are talked of instead of the Duke of — for the vacant garter and the office of chamberlain."

"You don't mean it!" cried Mauleverer, starting from his bed.

"A few other (but, I hear, chiefly legal) promotions are to be made. Among the rest, my learned brother, the democrat Sarsden is to have a silk gown; Cromwell is to be attorney-general; and, between ourselves, they have offered me a judgeship."

"But the garter!" said Mauleverer, scarcely hearing the rest of the lawyer's news, — "the whole object, aim, and ambition of my life. How truly kind in the king! After all," continued the earl, laughing, and throwing himself back, "opinions are variable; truth is not uniform: the times change, not we, — and we must have peace instead of war!"

"Your maxims are indisputable, and the conclusion you come to is excellent," said Brandon.

"Why, you and I, my dear fellow," said the earl, "who know men, and who have lived all our lives in the world, *must* laugh behind the scenes at the cant we

wrap in tinsel, and send out to stalk across the stage. We know that our Coriolanus of Tory integrity is a corporal kept by a prostitute; and the Brutus of Whig liberty is a lackey turned out of place for stealing the spoons; but we must not tell this to the world. So, Brandon, you must write me a speech for the next session, and be sure it has plenty of general maxims, and concludes with 'my bleeding country!'"

The lawyer smiled. "You consent then to the expulsion of Sternhold and Raffden?—for, after all, that is the question. Our British vessel, as the d—d metaphormongers call the state, carries the public good safe in the hold, like brandy; and it is only when fear, storm, or the devil, makes the rogues quarrel among themselves, and break up the casks, that one gets above a thimbleful at a time. We should go on fighting with the rest of the world forever, if the ministers had not taken to fight among themselves."

"As for Sternhold," said the earl, "'t is a vulgar dog, and voted for economical reform. Besides, I don't know him: he may go to the devil for aught I care; but Raffden must be dealt handsomely with, or, despite the garter, I will fall back among the Whigs, who, after all, give tolerable dinners."

"But why, my lord, must Raffden be treated better than his brother recusant?"

"Because he sent me, in the handsomest manner possible, a pipe of that wonderful madeira which you know I consider the chief grace of my cellars; and he gave up a canal navigation bill, which would have enriched his whole county, when he knew that it would injure my property. No, Brandon, curse public cant; we know what that is. But we are gentlemen, and our private friends must not be thrown overboard,

—unless, at least, we do it in the civilest manner we can.”

“Fear not,” said the lawyer; “you have only to say the word, and the cabinet can cook up an embassy to Owhyhee, and send Raffden there with a stipend of five thousand a year.”

“Ah! that’s well thought of; or we might give him a grant of a hundred thousand acres in one of the colonies, or let him buy crown land at a discount of eighty per cent. So that’s settled.”

“And now, my dear friend,” said Brandon, “I will tell you frankly why I come so early; I am required to give a hasty answer to the proposal *I* have received, — namely, of the judgeship. Your opinion?”

“A judgeship! *you* a judge? What! forsake your brilliant career for so petty a dignity? — you jest!”

“Not at all, — listen. You know how bitterly I have opposed this peace, and what hot enemies I have made among the new friends of the administration: on the one hand, these enemies insist on sacrificing me; and on the other, if I *were* to stay in the Lower House and speak for what I have before opposed, I should forfeit the support of a great portion of my own party: hated by one body, and mistrusted by the other, a seat in the House of Commons ceases to be an object. It is proposed that I should retire on the dignity of a judge, with the positive and pledged, though secret, promise of the first vacancy among the chiefs. The place of chief justice or chief baron is indeed the only fair remuneration for my surrender of the gains of my profession, and the abandonment of my parliamentary and legal career; the title, which will of course be attached to it, might go (at least, by an exertion of interest) to the eldest son of my niece, in case she married a com-

moner; or," added he, after a pause, "her second son, in case she married a peer."

"Ha, — true!" said Mauleverer, quickly, and as if struck by some sudden thought; "and your charming niece, Brandon, would be worthy of any honor either to her children or herself. You do not know how struck I was with her: there is something so graceful in her simplicity; and in her manner of smoothing down the little rugosities of Warlock House, there was so genuine and so easy a dignity, that I declare I almost thought myself young again, and capable of the self-cheat of believing myself in love. But, oh! Brandon, imagine me at your brother's board — me, for whom ortolans are too substantial, and who feel, when I tread, the slightest inequality in the carpets of Tournay! — imagine me, dear Brandon, in a black wainscot room, hung round with your ancestors in brown wigs with posies in their button-holes: an immense fire on one side, and a thorough draught on the other; a huge circle of beef before me, smoking like Vesuvius, and twice as large; a plateful (the plate was pewter, — is there not a metal so called?) of this mingled flame and lava sent under my very nostril, and upon pain of ill-breeding to be despatched down my proper mouth; an old gentleman in fustian breeches and worsted stockings, by way of a butler, filling me a can of ale, and your worthy brother asking me if I would not prefer port; a lean footman in livery (such a livery, ye gods!) scarlet, blue, yellow, and green, a rainbow ill made! on the opposite side of the table, looking at the 'lord' with eyes and mouth equally open, and large enough to swallow me; and your excellent brother himself at the head of the table glowing through the mists of the beef like the rising sun in a sign-post; — and then, Brandon, turning

from this image, behold beside me the fair, delicate, aristocratic, yet simple loveliness of your niece, and — but you look angry: I have offended you?”

It was high time for Mauleverer to ask that question; for, during the whole of the earl's recital, the dark face of his companion had literally burned with rage: and here we may observe how generally selfishness, which *makes* the man of the world, *prevents* its possessor, by a sort of paradox, from being *consummately* so. For Mauleverer, occupied by the pleasure he felt at his own wit, and never having that magic sympathy with others which creates the incessantly keen observer, had not for a moment thought that he was offending to the quick the hidden pride of the lawyer. Nay, so little did he suspect Brandon's real weaknesses, that he thought him a philosopher who would have laughed alike at principles and people, however near to him might be the latter, and however important the former. Mastering by a single effort, which restored his cheek to its usual steady hue, the outward signs of his displeasure, Brandon rejoined.

“Offend me! by no means, my dear lord. I do not wonder at your painful situation in an old country gentleman's house, which has not for centuries offered scenes fit for the presence of so distinguished a guest. Never, I may say, since the time when Sir Charles de Brandon entertained Elizabeth at Warlock; and your ancestor (you know my old musty studies on those points of obscure antiquity), John Mauleverer, who was a noted goldsmith of London, supplied the plate for the occasion.”

“Fairly retorted,” said Mauleverer, smiling; for though the earl had a great contempt for low birth set on high places, in other men, he was utterly void of

pride in his own family, — “fairly retorted! but I never meant anything else but a laugh at your brother’s house-keeping; a joke, surely, permitted to a man whose own fastidiousness on these matters is so standing a jest. But, by Heavens, Brandon, to turn from these subjects, your niece is the prettiest girl I have seen for twenty years; and if she would forget my being the descendant of John Mauleverer, the noted goldsmith of London, she may be Lady Mauleverer as soon as she pleases.”

“Nay, now let us be serious, and talk of the judgeship,” said Brandon, affecting to treat the proposal as a joke.

“By the soul of Sir Charles de Brandon, I am serious!” cried the earl; “and as a proof of it, I hope you will let me pay my respects to your niece to-day, — not with my offer in my hand yet; for it must be a love match on *both* sides.” And the earl, glancing towards an opposite glass, which reflected his attenuated but comely features, beneath his velvet nightcap, trimmed with *Mechlin*, laughed half-triumphantly as he spoke.

A sneer just passed the lips of Brandon, and as instantly vanished; while Mauleverer continued, —

“And as for the judgeship, dear Brandon, I advise you to accept it, though you know best; and I do think no man will stand a fairer chance of the chief-justice-ship: or, though it be somewhat unusual for ‘common’ lawyers, why not the woolsack itself? As you say, the second son of your niece might inherit the dignity of the peerage.”

“Well, I will consider of it favorably,” said Brandon, and soon afterwards he left the nobleman to renew his broken repose.

“I can’t laugh at that man,” said Mauleverer to himself, as he turned round in his bed, “though he has

much that I should laugh at in another; and, faith, there is one little matter I might well scorn him for, if I were not a philosopher. 'Tis a pretty girl, his niece, and with proper instructions might do one credit; besides, she has sixty thousand pounds ready money, and, faith, I have not a shilling for my own pleasure, though I have — or alas! had — fifty thousand a year for that of my establishment. In all probability she will be the lawyer's heiress, and he must have made, at least, as much again as her portion; nor is *he*, poor devil, a very good life. Moreover, if he rise to the peerage! and the second son, — well, well, it will not be such a bad match for the goldsmith's descendant, either! ”

With that thought Lord Mauleverer fell asleep. He rose about noon, dressed himself with unusual pains, and was just going forth on a visit to Miss Brandon, when he suddenly remembered that her uncle had not mentioned her address or his own. He referred to the lawyer's note of the preceding evening; no direction was inscribed on it, and Mauleverer was forced, with much chagrin, to forego for that day the pleasure he had promised himself.

In truth, the wary lawyer, who, as we have said, despised show and outward appearances as much as any man, was yet sensible of their effect even in the eyes of a lover; and, moreover, Lord Mauleverer was one whose habits of life were calculated to arouse a certain degree of vigilance on points of household pomp, even in the most unobservant. Brandon therefore resolved that Lucy should not be visited by her admirer till the removal to their new abode was effected: nor was it till the third day from that on which Mauleverer had held with Brandon the interview we have recorded, that the earl received a note from Brandon, seemingly turning

only on political matters, but inscribed with the address and direction in full form.

Mauleverer answered it in person. He found Lucy at home, and more beautiful than ever; and from that day his mind was made up, as the mammas say, and his visits became constant.

CHAPTER XV.

There is a festival where knights and dames,
 And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims,
 Appear.

'T is he — how came he thence ? — what doth he here ?

Lara.

THERE are two charming situations in life for a woman: one, the first freshness of heiress-ship and beauty; the other, youthful widowhood with a large jointure. It was at least Lucy's fortune to enjoy the first. No sooner was she fairly launched into the gay world, than she became the object of universal idolatry. Crowds followed her wherever she moved: nothing was talked of, or dreamed of, toasted, or betted on, but Lucy Brandon; even her simplicity, and utter ignorance of the arts of fine life, enhanced the *éclat* of her reputation. Somehow or other *young* people of the gentler sex are rarely ill-bred, even in their eccentricities; and there is often a great deal of grace in inexperience. Her uncle, who accompanied her everywhere, himself no slight magnet of attraction, viewed her success with a complacent triumph which he suffered no one but her father or herself to detect. To the smooth coolness of his manner, nothing would have seemed more foreign than pride at the notice gained by a beauty, or exultation at any favor won from the caprices of fashion. As for the good old squire, one would have imagined him far more the invalid than his brother. He was scarcely ever seen; for though he went everywhere, he was one of those persons who sink into a corner the moment they

enter a room. Whoever discovered him in his retreat, held out their hands, and exclaimed, "God bless me! — *you* here! we have not seen you for this age!" Now and then, if in a very dark niche of the room a card-table had been placed, the worthy gentleman toiled through an obscure rubber, but more frequently he sat with his hands clasped, and his mouth open, counting the number of candles in the room, or calculating "when that stupid music would be over."

Lord Mauleverer, though a polished and courteous man, whose great object was necessarily to ingratiate himself with the father of his intended bride, had a horror of being bored, which surpassed all other feelings in his mind. He could not, therefore, persuade himself to submit to the melancholy duty of listening to the squire's "linked *speeches* long drawn out." He always glided by the honest man's station, seemingly in an exceeding hurry, with a "Ah, my *dear* sir, how do you do? How delighted I am to see you! And your incomparable daughter? Oh, there she is! — pardon me, dear sir, — you see my attraction!"

Lucy, indeed, who never forgot any one (except herself occasionally), sought her father's retreat as often as she was able; but her engagements were so incessant, that she no sooner lost one partner, than she was claimed and carried off by another. However, the squire bore his solitude with tolerable cheerfulness, and always declared that "he was very well amused; although balls and concerts were necessarily a little dull to one who came from a fine old place like Warlock Manor House, and it was not the same thing that pleased young ladies (for, to them, that fiddling and giggling till two o'clock in the morning might be a *very pretty way of killing time*) and their *papas*!"

What considerably added to Lucy's celebrity was the marked notice and admiration of a man so high in rank and *ton* as Lord Mauleverer. That personage, who still retained much of a youthful mind and temper, and who was in his nature more careless than haughty, preserved little or no state in his intercourse with the social revelers at Bath. He cared not whither he went, so that he was in the train of the young beauty; and the most fastidious nobleman of the English court was seen in every second and third rate set of a great watering-place, the attendant, the flirt, and often the ridicule of the daughter of an obscure and almost insignificant country squire. Despite the honor of so distinguished a lover, and despite all the novelties of her situation, the pretty head of Lucy Brandon was as yet, however, perfectly unturned; and, as for her heart, the only impression that it had ever received, was made by that wandering guest of the village rector, whom she had never again seen, but who yet clung to her imagination, invested not only with all the graces which in right of a singularly handsome person he possessed, but with those to which he never could advance a claim, — more dangerous to her peace, from the very circumstance of their origin in her fancy, not his merits.

They had now been some little time at Bath, and Brandon's brief respite was pretty nearly expired, when a public ball of uncommon and manifold attraction was announced. It was to be graced not only by the presence of all the surrounding families, but also by that of royalty itself, — it being an acknowledged fact, that people dance much better, and eat much more supper, when any relation to a king is present.

"I must stay for this ball, Lucy," said Brandon, who, after spending the day with Lord Mauleverer, re-

turned home in a mood more than usually cheerful, —
“I must stay for this one ball, Lucy, and witness your complete triumph, even though it will be necessary to leave you the very next morning.”

“So soon!” cried Lucy.

“So soon!” echoed the uncle, with a smile. “How good you are to speak thus to an old valetudinarian whose company must have fatigued you to death! — nay, no pretty denials! But the great object of my visit to this place is accomplished: I have seen you, I have witnessed your *début* in the great world, with, I may say, more than a father’s exultation, and I go back to my dry pursuits with the satisfaction of thinking our old and withered genealogical tree has put forth one blossom worthy of its freshest day.”

“Uncle!” said Lucy, reprovingly, and holding up her taper finger with an arch smile, mingling with a blush, in which the woman’s vanity spoke, unknown to herself.

“And why that look, Lucy?” said Brandon.

“Because — because — well, no matter! you have been bred to that trade in which, as you say yourself, men tell untruths for others till they lose all truth for themselves. But let us talk of you, not me,—are you really well enough to leave us?”

Simple and even cool as the words of Lucy’s question, when written, appear, in her mouth they took so tender, so anxious a tone, that Brandon, who had no friend, nor wife, nor child, nor any one in his household, in whom interest in his health or welfare was a thing of course, and who was consequently wholly unaccustomed to the accent of kindness, felt himself of a sudden touched and stricken.

“Why, indeed, Lucy,” said he, in a less artificial voice than that in which he usually spoke, “I should like

still to profit by your cares, and forget my infirmities and pains in your society; but I cannot: the tide of events, like that of nature, waits not our pleasure."

"But we may take our own time for setting sail," said Lucy.

"Ay, this comes of talking in metaphor," rejoined Brandon, smiling; "they who begin it, always get the worst of it. In plain words, dear Lucy, I can give no more time to my own ailments. A lawyer cannot play truant in term time without —"

"Losing a few guineas!" said Lucy, interrupting him.

"Worse than that, — his practice and his name."

"Better those than health and peace of mind."

"Out on you, — no!" said Brandon, quickly, and almost fiercely: "we waste all the greenness and pith of our life in striving to gain a distinguished slavery; and when it is gained, we must not think that a humble independence would have been better! If we ever admit that thought, what fools — what lavish fools we have been! No!" continued Brandon, after a momentary pause, and in a tone milder and gayer, though not less characteristic of the man's stubbornness of will, — "after losing all youth's enjoyments and manhood's leisure in order that in age, the mind, the all-conquering mind, should break its way at last into the applauding opinions of men, I should be an effeminate idler indeed, did I suffer — so long as its jarring parts hold together, or so long as I have the power to command its members — this weak body to frustrate the labor of its better and nobler portion, and command that which it is ordained to serve."

Lucy knew not while she listened, half in fear, half in admiration, to her singular relation, that at the very

moment he thus spoke, his disease was preying upon him in one of its most relentless moods, without the power of wringing from him a single outward token of his torture. But she wanted nothing to increase her pity and affection for a man who, in consequence perhaps of his ordinary surface of worldly and cold properties of temperament, never failed to leave an indelible impression on all who had ever seen that temperament broken through by deeper, though often by more evil feelings.

"Shall you go to Lady ——'s rout?" asked Brandon, easily sliding back into common topics. "Lord Mauleverer requested me to ask you."

"That depends on you and my father!"

"If on me, I answer, 'Yes!'" said Brandon. "I like hearing Mauleverer, especially among persons who do not understand him: there is a refined and subtle sarcasm running through the commonplaces of his conversation which cuts the good fools, like the invisible sword in the fable that lopped off heads, without occasioning the owners any other sensation than a pleasing and self-complacent titillation. How immeasurably superior he is in manner and address to all we meet here; does it not strike you?"

"Yes — no — I can't say that it does exactly," rejoined Lucy.

"Is that confusion tender?" thought Brandon.

"In a word," continued Lucy, "Lord Mauleverer is one whom I think pleasing, without fascination; and amusing, without brilliancy. He is evidently accomplished in mind, and graceful in manner; and, withal, the most uninteresting person I ever met."

"Women have not often thought so!" said Brandon.

"I cannot believe that they can think otherwise."

A certain expression, partaking of scorn, played over

Brandon's hard features. It was a noticeable trait in him, that while he was most anxious to impress Lucy with a favorable opinion of Lord Mauleverer, he was never quite able to mask a certain satisfaction at any jest at the earl's expense, or any opinion derogatory to his general character for pleasing the opposite sex; and this satisfaction was no sooner conceived, than it was immediately combated by the vexation he felt, that Lucy did not seem to share his own desire that she should become the wife of the courtier. There appeared as if, in that respect, there was a contest in his mind between interest on one hand, and private dislike or contempt on the other.

"You judge women wrongly!" said Brandon. "Ladies never know each other; of all persons, Mauleverer is best calculated to win them, and experience has proved my assertion. The proudest lot I know for a woman would be the thorough conquest of Lord Mauleverer; but it is impossible. He may be gallant, but he will never be subdued. He defies the whole female world, and with justice and impunity. Enough of him. Sing to me, dear Lucy."

The time for the ball approached, and Lucy, who was a charming girl, and had nothing of the angel about her, was sufficiently fond of gayety, dancing, music, and admiration, to feel her heart beat high at the expectation of the event.

At last the day itself came. Brandon dined alone with Mauleverer, having made the arrangement that he, with the earl, was to join his brother and niece at the ball. Mauleverer, who hated state except on great occasions, when no man displayed it with a better grace, never suffered his servants to wait at dinner when he was alone, or with one of his peculiar friends. The attendants

remained without, and were summoned at will by a bell laid beside the host.

The conversation was unrestrained.

"I am perfectly certain, Brandon," said Mauleverer, "that if you were to live tolerably well, you would soon get the better of your nervous complaints. It is all poverty of blood, believe me. Some more of the fins, eh? — no! oh, hang your abstemiousness, it is d—d unfriendly to eat so little! Talking of fins and friends, — Heaven defend me from ever again forming an intimacy with a pedantic epicure, especially if he puns!"

"Why, what has a pedant to do with fins?"

"I will tell you (ah, this madeira!) — I suggested to Lord Dareville, who affects the gourmand, what a capital thing a dish all fins (turbots' fins) might be made. 'Capital!' said he, in a rapture; 'dine on it with me to-morrow.' '*Volontiers*,' said I. The next day, after indulging in a pleasing reverie all the morning as to the manner in which Dareville's cook, who is not without genius, would accomplish the grand idea, I betook myself punctually to my engagement. Would you believe it? When the cover was removed, the sacrilegious dog of Amphitryon had put into the dish 'Cicero de Finibus.' 'There is a work all fins!' said he."

"Atrocious jest!" exclaimed Brandon, solemnly.

"Was it not? Whenever the gastronomists set up a religious inquisition, I trust they will roast every impious rascal who treats the divine mystery with levity. Fun upon cooking indeed! *Apropos* of Dareville, he is to come into the administration."

"You astonish me!" said Brandon. "I never heard that; I don't know him. He has very little power; has he any talent?"

"Yes, a very great one, — *acquired* though!"

"What is it?"

"A pretty wife!"

"My lord!" exclaimed Brandon, abruptly, and half rising from his seat.

Mauleverer looked up hastily, and, on seeing the expression of his companion's face, colored deeply; there was a silence for some moments.

"Tell me," said Brandon, indifferently, helping himself to vegetables, for he seldom touched meat, — and a more amusing contrast can scarcely be conceived, than that between the earnest epicurism of Mauleverer, and the careless contempt of the sublime art manifested by his guest, — "tell me, you who necessarily know everything, whether the government really is settled, — whether you are to have the garter, and I (mark the difference!) the judgeship."

"Why, so, I imagine, it will be arranged, — namely, if you will consent to hang up the rogues, instead of living by the fools!"

"One may unite both!" returned Brandon. "But I believe, in general, it is *vice versâ*, for we live by the rogues, and it is only the fools we are able to hang up. You ask me if I will take the judgeship. I would not — no, I would rather cut my hand off" (and the lawyer spoke with great bitterness) — "forsake my present career, despite all the obstacles that now encumber it, did I think that this miserable body would suffer me for two years longer to pursue it."

"You shock me!" said Mauleverer, a little affected, but nevertheless applying the cayenne to his cucumber with his unusual unerring nicety of tact, — "you shock me; but you are considerably better than you were."

"It is not," continued Brandon, who was rather

speaking to himself than to *his friend*, — “it is not that I am unable to conquer the pain, and to master the recreant nerves; but I feel myself growing weaker and weaker beneath the continual exertion of my remaining powers, and I shall die before I have gained half my objects, if I do not leave the labors which are literally tearing me to pieces.”

“But,” said Lord Mauleverer, who was the idlest of men, “the judgeship is not an easy sinecure.”

“No! but there is less demand on the mind in that station than in my present one;” and Brandon paused before he continued. “Candidly, Mauleverer, you do not think they will deceive me; you do not think they mean to leave me to this political death without writing ‘*Resurgam*’ over the hatchment?”

“They dare not!” said Mauleverer, quaffing his fourth glass of madeira.

“Well! I have decided on my change of life,” said the lawyer, with a slight sigh.

“So have I on my change of opinion,” chimed in the earl. “I will tell you what opinions seem to me like.”

“What?” said Brandon, abstractedly.

“*Trees!*” answered Mauleverer, quaintly. “If they can be made serviceable by standing, don’t part with a stick; but when they are of that growth that sells well, or whenever they shut out a *fine prospect*, cut them down, and pack them off by all manner of means! And now for the second course.

“I wonder,” said the earl, when our political worthies were again alone, “whether there ever existed a minister who cared three straws for the people: *many* care for *their party*, but as for the country —”

“It is all fiddlestick!” added the lawyer, with more significance than grace.

"Right; it is all fiddlestick, as you tersely express it. King, Constitution, and Church, forever! which, being interpreted, means, — first, King, or Crown influence, judgeships, and garters; secondly, Constitution, or fees to the lawyer, places to the statesman, laws for the rich, and game laws for the poor; thirdly, Church, or livings for our younger sons, and starvings for their curates!"

"Ha, ha!" said Brandon, laughing sardonically; "*we* know human nature!"

"And how it may be gulled!" quoth the courtier. "Here's a health to your niece! and may it not be long before you hail her as your friend's bride!"

"Bride, *et cætera*," said Brandon, with a sneer, meant only for his own satisfaction. "But, mark me, my dear lord, do not be too sure of her, — she is a singular girl, and of more independence than the generality of women. She will not think of your rank and station in estimating you; she will think only of their owner; and pardon me if I suggest to you, who know the sex so well, one plan that it may not be unadvisable for you to pursue. Don't let her fancy you entirely hers: rouse her jealousy, pique her pride, — let her think you unconquerable; and unless she is unlike all women, she will want to conquer you."

The earl smiled. "I must take my chance," said he, with a confident tone.

"The hoary coxcomb!" muttered Brandon between his teeth: "now will his folly spoil all."

"And that reminds me," continued Mauleverer, "that time wanes, and dinner is not over; let us not hurry, but let us be silent, to enjoy the more. These truffles in champagne, — *do* taste them, they would raise the dead."

The lawyer smiled, and accepted the kindness, though he left the delicacy untouched; and Mauleverer, whose soul was in his plate, saw not the heartless rejection.

Meanwhile the youthful beauty had already entered the theatre of pleasure, and was now seated with the squire, at the upper end of the half-filled ball-room.

A gay lady of the fashion at that time, and of that half-and-half rank to which belonged the aristocracy of Bath, — one of those curious persons we meet with in the admirable novels of Miss Burney, as appertaining to the order of fine ladies, — made the trio with our heiress and her father, and pointed out to them by name the various characters that entered the apartments. She was still in the full tide of scandal, when an unusual sensation was visible in the environs of the door; three strangers of marked mien, gay dress, and an air which, though differing in each, was in all alike remarkable for a sort of “dashing” assurance, made their *entrée*. One was of uncommon height, and possessed of an exceedingly fine head of hair; another was of a more quiet and unpretending aspect, but, nevertheless, he wore upon his face a supercilious, yet not ill-humored expression; the third was many years younger than his companions, strikingly handsome in face and figure, altogether of a better taste in dress, and possessing a manner that, though it had equal ease, was not equally noticeable for impudence and swagger.

“Who can those be?” said Lucy’s female friend, in a wondering tone. “I never saw them before; they must be great people, — they have all *the airs of persons of quality*! Dear, how odd that I should not know them!”

While the good lady, who, like all good ladies of that stamp, thought people of quality had airs, was

thus lamenting her ignorance of the new-comers, a general whisper of a similar import was already circulating round the room, "Who are they?" and the universal answer was, "Can't tell, — never saw them before!"

Our strangers seemed by no means displeased with the evident and immediate impression they had made. They stood in the most conspicuous part of the room, enjoying, among themselves, a low conversation, frequently broken by fits of laughter; tokens, we need not add, of their supereminently good breeding. The handsome figure of the youngest stranger, and the simple and seemingly unconscious grace of his attitudes, were not, however, unworthy of the admiration he excited; and even his laughter, rude as it really was, displayed so dazzling a set of teeth, and was accompanied by such brilliant eyes, that before he had been ten minutes in the room, there was scarcely a young lady under thirty-nine not disposed to fall in love with him.

Apparently heedless of the various remarks which reached their ears, our strangers, after they had from their station sufficiently surveyed the beauties of the ball, strolled arm-in-arm through the rooms. Having sauntered through the ball and card rooms, they passed the door that led to the entrance passage, and gazed, with other loiterers, upon the new-comers ascending the stairs. Here the two younger strangers renewed their whispered conversation, while the eldest, who was also the tallest one, carelessly leaning against the wall, employed himself for a few moments in thrusting his fingers through his hair. In finishing this occupation, the peculiar state of his ruffles forced itself upon the observation of our gentleman, who, after gazing for some moments on an envious rent in the right ruffle, muttered some indistinct words, like "the cock of that

confounded pistol," and then tucked up the mutilated ornament with a peculiarly nimble motion of the fingers of his left hand: the next moment, diverted by a new care, the stranger applied his digital members to the arranging and caressing of a remarkably splendid brooch, set in the bosom of a shirt, the rude texture of which formed a singular contrast with the magnificence of the embellishment, and the fineness of the one ruffle suffered by our modern Hyperion to make its appearance beneath his cinnamon-colored coat-sleeve. These little personal arrangements completed, and a dazzling snuff-box released from the confinement of a side-pocket, tapped thrice, and lightened of two pinches of its titillating luxury, the stranger now, with the guardian eye of friendship, directed a searching glance to the dress of his friends. *There*, all appeared meet for his strictest scrutiny, save, indeed, that the supercilious-looking stranger having just drawn forth his gloves, the lining of his coat-pocket — which was rather soiled into the bargain — had not returned to its internal station; the tall stranger, seeing this little inelegance, kindly thrust three fingers with a sudden and light dive into his friend's pocket, and effectually repulsed the forwardness of the intrusive lining. The supercilious stranger no sooner felt the touch, than he started back, and whispered his officious companion, —

"What! among friends, Ned! Fie, now; curb the nature in thee for one night, at least."

Before he of the flowing locks had time to answer, the master of the ceremonies, who had for the last three minutes been eying the strangers through his glass, stepped forward with a sliding bow, and the handsome gentleman taking upon himself the superiority and precedence over his comrades, was the first to return

the courtesy. He did this with so good a grace, and so pleasing an expression of countenance, that the censor of bows was charmed at once, and, with a second and more profound salutation, announced himself and his office.

"You would like to dance, probably, gentlemen?" he asked, glancing at each, but directing his words to the one who had prepossessed him.

"You are very good," said the comely stranger; "and, for my part, I shall be extremely indebted to you for the exercise of your powers in my behalf. Allow me to return with you to the ball-room, and I can there point out to you the objects of my especial admiration."

The master of the ceremonies bowed as before, and he and his new acquaintance strolled into the ball-room, followed by the two comrades of the latter.

"Have you been long in Bath, sir?" inquired the monarch of the rooms.

"No, indeed, we only arrived this evening."

"From London?"

"No; we made a little tour across the country."

"Ah! very pleasant this fine weather."

"Yes; especially in the evenings."

"Oho! — romantic!" thought the man of balls, as he rejoined aloud, "Why, the nights *are* agreeable, and the moon is particularly favorable to us."

"Not always," quoth the stranger.

"True, true, the night before last was dark; but, in general, surely the moon has been very bright."

The stranger was about to answer, but checked himself, and simply bowed his head in assent.

"I wonder who they are!" thought the master of the ceremonies. "Pray, sir," said he, in a low tone, "is that gentleman, that *tall* gentleman, any way related to Lord ——? I cannot but think I see a family likeness."

"Not in the least related to his lordship," answered the stranger; "but he is of a family that have made a noise in the world; though he (as well as my other friend) is merely a commoner!" laying a stress on the last word.

"Nothing, sir, can be more respectable than a commoner of family," returned the polite Mr. —, with a bow.

"I agree with you, sir," answered the stranger, with another. "But, Heavens!" — and the stranger started; for at that moment his eye caught for the first time, at the far end of the room, the youthful and brilliant countenance of Lucy Brandon, — "do I see rightly, or is that Miss Brandon?"

"It is indeed that lovely young lady," said Mr. —. "I congratulate you on knowing one so admired. I suppose that you, being blessed with her acquaintance, do not need the formality of my introduction?"

"Umph!" said the stranger, rather shortly and uncourteously, — "no! Perhaps you had better present me!"

"By what name shall I have that honor, sir?" discreetly inquired the nomenclator.

"Clifford," answered the stranger; "Captain Clifford."

Upon this, the prim master of the ceremonies, threading his path through the now fast-filling room, approached towards Lucy to obey Mr. Clifford's request. Meanwhile that gentleman, before he followed the steps of the tutelary spirit of the place, paused, and said to his friends, in a tone careless, yet not without command, "Hark ye, gentlemen, oblige me by being as civil and silent as ye are able, and don't thrust yourselves upon me, as you are accustomed to do, whenever you see *no* opportunity of indulging me with that honor with the

least show of propriety!" So saying, and waiting no reply, Mr. Clifford hastened after the master of the ceremonies.

"Our friend grows mighty imperious!" said Long Ned, whom our readers have already recognized in the tall stranger.

"'Tis the way with your rising geniuses," answered the moralizing Augustus Tomlinson. "Suppose we go to the card-room, and get up a rubber?"

"Well thought of," said Ned, yawning, — a thing he was very apt to do in society; "and I wish nothing worse to those who try our *rubbers*, than that they may be well cleaned by them." Upon this witticism the Colossus of Roads, glancing towards the glass, strutted off, arm-in-arm with his companion, to the card-room.

During this short conversation the reintroduction of Mr. Clifford (the stranger of the rectory and deliverer of Dr. Slopperton) to Lucy Brandon had been effected, and the hand of the heiress was already engaged (according to the custom of that time) for the *two* ensuing dances.

It was about twenty minutes after the above presentation had taken place, that Lord Mauleverer and William Brandon entered the rooms; and the buzz created by the appearance of the noted peer and the distinguished lawyer had scarcely subsided, before the royal personage expected to grace the "festive scene" (as the newspapers say of a great room with plenty of miserable-looking people in it) arrived. The most attractive persons in Europe may be found among the royal family of England, and the great personage then at Bath, in consequence of certain political intrigues, wished, at that time especially, to make himself as popular as possible. Having gone the round of the old ladies, and assured

them, as the "Court Journal" assures the old ladies at this day, that they were "morning stars," and "swan-like wonders," the prince espied Brandon, and immediately beckoned to him with a familiar gesture. The smooth but saturnine lawyer approached the royal presence with the manner that peculiarly distinguished him, and which blended, in no ungraceful mixture, a species of stiffness that passed with the crowd for native independence, with a supple insinuation that was usually deemed the token of latent benevolence of heart. There was something, indeed, in Brandon's address that always pleased the great; and they liked him the better, because, though he stood on no idle political points, mere differences in the view taken of a hair-breadth — such as a corn law or a catholic bill — alteration in the church, or a reform in Parliament, — yet he invariably talked so like a man of honor (except when with Mauleverer), that his urbanity seemed attachment to individuals; and his concessions to power, sacrifices of private opinion for the sake of obliging his friends.

"I am very glad, indeed," said the royal personage, "to see Mr. Brandon looking so much better. Never was the Crown in greater want of his services; and, if rumor speak true, they will soon be required in another department of his profession."

Brandon bowed, and answered, —

"So please your Royal Highness, they will always be at the command of a king from whom I have experienced such kindness, in any capacity for which his Majesty may deem them fitting."

"It is true, then!" said his Royal Highness, significantly; "I congratulate you! The quiet dignity of the bench must seem to you a great change after a career so busy and restless?"

"I fear I shall feel it so at first, your Royal Highness," answered Brandon, "for I like even the toil of my profession; and at this moment, when I am in full practice, it more than ever, — but" (checking himself at once) "his Majesty's wishes, and my satisfaction in complying with them, are more than sufficient to remove any momentary regret I might otherwise have felt in quitting those toils which have now become to me a second nature."

"It is possible," rejoined the prince, "that his Majesty took into consideration the delicate state of health which, in common with the whole public, I grieve to see the papers have attributed to one of the most distinguished ornaments of the bar."

"So please your Royal Highness," answered Brandon, coolly, and with a smile which the most piercing eye could not have believed the mask to the agony then gnawing at his nerves, "it is the interest of my rivals to exaggerate the little ailments of a weak constitution. I thank Providence that I am now entirely recovered; and at no time of my life have I been less unable to discharge — so far as my *native* and *mental* incapacities will allow — the duties of any occupation, however arduous. Nay, as the brute grows accustomed to the mill, so have I grown wedded to business; and even the brief relaxation I have now allowed myself seems to me rather irksome than pleasurable."

"I rejoice to hear you speak thus," answered his Royal Highness, warmly; "and I trust for many years, and," added he, in a lower tone, "in the highest chamber of the senate, that we may profit by your talents. The times are those in which many occasions occur, that oblige all true friends of the constitution to quit minor employment for that great constitutional one that con-

cerns us all, the highest and the meanest; and" (the royal voice sank still lower) "I feel justified in assuring you, that the office of chief justice alone is not considered by his Majesty as a sufficient reward for your generous sacrifice of present ambition to the difficulties of government."

Brandon's proud heart swelled, and that moment the veriest pains of hell would scarcely have been felt.

While the aspiring schemer was thus agreeably engaged, Mauleverer, sliding through the crowd with that grace which charmed every one, old and young, and addressing to all he knew some lively or affectionate remark, made his way to the dancers, among whom he had just caught a glimpse of Lucy. "I wonder," he thought, "whom she is dancing with. I hope it is that ridiculous fellow Mossop, who tells a good story against himself; or that handsome ass Belmont, who looks at his own legs, instead of seeming to have eyes for no one but his partner. Ah! if Tarquin had but known women as well as I do, he would have had no reason to be rough with Lucretia. 'Tis a thousand pities that experience comes, in women as in the world, just when it begins to be no longer of use to us!"

As he made these moral reflections, Mauleverer gained the dancers, and beheld Lucy listening, with downcast eyes and cheeks that *evidently* blushed, to a young man whom Mauleverer acknowledged at once to be one of the best-looking fellows he had ever seen. The stranger's countenance, despite an extreme darkness of complexion, was, to be sure, from the great regularity of the features, rather effeminate; but, on the other hand, his figure, though slender and graceful, betrayed to an experienced eye an extraordinary proportion of sinew and muscle; and even the dash of effeminacy in the countenance was

accompanied by so manly and frank an air, and was so perfectly free from all coxcombry or self-conceit, that it did not in the least decrease the prepossessing effect of his appearance. An angry and bitter pang shot across that portion of Mauleverer's frame which the earl thought fit, for want of another name, to call his heart. "How cursedly pleased she looks!" muttered he. "By Heaven! that stolen glance under the left eyelid, dropped as suddenly as it is raised! and *he* — ha! — how firmly he holds that little hand. I think I see him paddle with it; and then the dog's earnest, intent look, — and she all blushes! though she dare not look up to meet his gaze, feeling it by intuition. Oh! the demure, modest, shamefaced hypocrite! How silent she is! — she can prate enough to *me*! I would give my promised garter if she would but talk to him. Talk, talk, — laugh, prattle, only simper, in God's name, and I shall be happy! but that bashful, blushing silence, — it is insupportable. Thank Heaven, the dance is over. Thank Heaven again! I have not felt such pains since the last nightmare I had, after dining with her father?"

With a face all smiles, but with a mien in which more dignity than he ordinarily assumed was worn, Mauleverer now moved towards Lucy, who was leaning on her partner's arm. The earl, who had ample tact where his consummate selfishness did not warp it, knew well how to act the lover, without running ridiculously into the folly of seeming to play the hoary dangler. He sought rather to be lively than sentimental, and beneath the wit to conceal the suitor.

Having paid, then, with a careless gallantry, his first compliments, he entered into so animated a conversation, interspersed with so many *naïve* yet palpably just

observations on the characters present, that perhaps he had never appeared to more brilliant advantage. At length, as the music was about to recommence, Mauleverer, with a careless glance at Lucy's partner, said, — "Will Miss Brandon now allow me the agreeable duty of conducting her to her father?"

"I believe," answered Lucy, and her voice suddenly became timid, "that according to the laws of the rooms, I am engaged to this gentleman for another dance."

Clifford, in an assured and easy tone, replied in assent.

As he spoke, Mauleverer honored him with a more accurate survey than he had hitherto bestowed on him; and whether or not there was any expression of contempt or superciliousness in the survey, it was sufficient to call up the indignant blood to Clifford's cheek. Returning the look with interest, he said to Lucy, "I believe, Miss Brandon, that the dance is about to begin;" and Lucy, obeying the hint, left the aristocratic Mauleverer to his own meditations.

At that moment the master of the ceremonies came bowing by, half afraid to address so great a person as Mauleverer, but willing to show his respect by the profoundness of his salutation.

"Aha, my dear Mr. ——!" said the earl, holding out both his hands to the Lycurgus of the rooms; "how are you? Pray can you inform me who that young — *man* is, now dancing with Miss Brandon?"

"It is — let me see — oh! it is a Captain Clifford, my lord; a very fine young man, my lord! Has your lordship never met him?"

"Never; who is he? One under your more especial patronage?" said the earl, smiling.

"Nay, indeed," answered the master of the ceremonies, with a simper of gratification. "I scarcely

know who he is yet; the captain only made his appearance here to-night for the first time. He came with two other gentlemen. Ah, there they are!" and he pointed the earl's scrutinizing attention to the elegant forms of Mr. Augustus Tomlinson and Mr. Ned Pepper, just emerging from the card-rooms. The swagger of the latter gentleman was so peculiarly important, that Mauleverer, angry as he was, could scarcely help laughing. The master of the ceremonies noted the earl's countenance, and remarked that "that fine-looking man seemed disposed to give himself *airs*!"

"Judging from the gentleman's appearance," said the earl, dryly (Ned's face, to say truth, did betoken his affection for the bottle), "I should imagine that he was much more accustomed to give himself *thorough draughts*!"

"Ah!" renewed the *arbiter elegantiarum*, who had not heard Mauleverer's observation, which was uttered in a very low voice, — "ah! they seem real dashers!"

"Dashers!" repeated Mauleverer; "true, *haberdashers*!"

Long Ned now, having in the way of his profession acquitted himself tolerably well at the card-table, thought he had purchased the right to parade himself through the rooms, and show the ladies what stuff a Pepper could be made of.

Leaning with his left hand on Tomlinson's arm, and employing the right in fanning himself furiously with his huge *chapeau bras*, the lengthy adventurer stalked slowly along: now setting out one leg jauntily, now the other, and ogling "the ladies" with a kind of Irish look, — namely, a look between a wink and a stare.

Released from the presence of Clifford, who kept a certain check on his companions, the apparition of Ned

became glaringly conspicuous; and wherever he passed, a universal whisper succeeded.

"Who can he be?" said the widow Matemore. " 'T is a droll creature; but what a head of hair! "

"For my part," answered the spinster Sneerall, "I think he is a linendraper in disguise; for I heard him talk to his companion of 'tape.' "

"Well, well," thought Mauleverer, "it would be but kind to seek out Brandon, and hint to him in what company his niece seems to have fallen!" And, so thinking, he glided to the corner where, with a gray-headed old politician, the astute lawyer was conning the affairs of Europe.

In the interim, the second dance had ended, and Clifford was conducting Lucy to her seat, each charmed with the other, when he found himself abruptly tapped on the back, and, turning round in alarm, — for such taps were not unfamiliar to him, — he saw the cool countenance of Long Ned, with one finger sagaciously laid beside the nose.

"How now?" said Clifford, between his ground teeth. "Did I not tell thee to put that huge bulk of thine as far from me as possible?"

"Humph!" grunted Ned; "if these are my thanks, I may as well keep my kindness to myself; but know you, my kid, that Lawyer Brandon is here, peering through the crowd at this very moment, in order to catch a glimpse of that woman's face of thine."

"Ha!" answered Clifford, in a very quick tone; "begone, then! I will meet you without the rooms immediately."

Clifford now turned to his partner, and bowing very low, in reality to hide his face from those sharp eyes which had once seen it in the court of Justice Burnflat,

said, "I trust, madam, I shall have the honor to meet you again,—is it, if I may be allowed to ask, with your celebrated uncle that you are staying, or —"

"With my father," answered Lucy, concluding the sentence Clifford had left unfinished; "but my uncle has been with us, though I fear he leaves us to-morrow."

Clifford's eyes sparkled; he made no answer, but, bowing again, receded into the crowd, and disappeared. Several times that night did the brightest eyes in Somersetshire rove anxiously round the rooms in search of our hero; but he was seen no more.

It was on the stairs that Clifford encountered his comrades; taking an arm of each, he gained the door without any adventure worth noting,—save that, being kept back by the crowd for a few moments, the moralizing Augustus Tomlinson, who honored the moderate Whigs by enrolling himself among their number, took up, *pour passer le temps*, a tall gold-headed cane, and, weighing it across his finger with a musing air, said, "Alas! among our supporters we often meet heads as heavy,—but of what a different metal!" The crowd now permitting, Augustus was walking away with his companions, and, in that absence of mind characteristic of philosophers, unconsciously bearing with him the gold-headed object of his reflection, when a stately footman stepping up to him, said, "Sir, my cane!"

"Cane, fellow!" said Tomlinson. "Ah, I am so absent! Here is thy cane. Only think of my carrying off the man's cane, Ned! ha! ha!"

"Absent, indeed!" grunted a knowing chairman, watching the receding figures of the three gentlemen: "Body o' me! but it was *the cane* that was about to be absent!"

CHAPTER XVI.

Whackum. — My dear rogues, dear boys, Bluster and Dingboy! you are the bravest fellows that ever scoured yet! — SHADWELL'S *Scourers*.

Cato, the Thessalian, was wont to say, that some things may be done unjustly, that many things may be done justly. — LORD BACON (being a justification of every rascality).

ALTHOUGH our three worthies had taken unto themselves a splendid lodging in Milsom Street, which, to please Ned, was over a hairdresser's shop; yet, instead of returning thither, or repairing to such taverns as might seem best befitting their fashion and garb, they struck at once from the gay parts of the town, and tarried not till they reached a mean-looking alehouse in a remote suburb.

The door was opened to them by an elderly lady; and Clifford, stalking before his companions into an apartment at the back of the house, asked if the other gentlemen were come yet.

"No," returned the dame. "Old Mr. Bags came in about ten minutes ago; but, hearing more work might be done, he went out again."

"Bring the lush and the pipes, old blone!" cried Ned, throwing himself on a bench; "we are never at a loss for company!"

"You, indeed, never can be, who are always inseparably connected with the object of your admiration," said Tomlinson, dryly, and taking up an old newspaper. Ned, who, though choleric, was a capital fellow, and

could bear a joke on himself, smiled, and, drawing forth a little pair of scissors, began trimming his nails.

"Curse me," said he, after a momentary silence, "if this is not a devilish deal pleasanter than playing the fine gentleman in that great room, with a rose in one's button-hole! What say you, Master Lovett?"

Clifford (as henceforth, despite his other aliases, we shall denominate our hero), who had thrown himself at full length on a bench at the far end of the room, and who seemed plunged into a sullen reverie, now looked up for a moment, and then, turning round and presenting the dorsal part of his body to Long Ned, muttered "Pish!"

"Hark ye, Master Lovett!" said Long Ned, coloring, "I don't know what has come over you of late; but I would have you learn that gentlemen are entitled to courtesy and polite behavior: and so, d'ye see, if you ride your high horse upon me, splice my extremities if I won't have satisfaction!"

"Hist, man, be quiet," said Tomlinson, philosophically snuffing the candles, —

" 'For companions to quarrel,
Is extremely immoral.' "

Don't you see that the captain is in a reverie? What good man ever loves to be interrupted in his meditations? Even Alfred the Great could not bear it! Perhaps, at this moment, with the true anxiety of a worthy chief, the captain is designing something for our welfare!"

"Captain, indeed!" muttered Long Ned, darting a wrathful look at Clifford, who had not deigned to pay any attention to Mr. Pepper's threat; "for my part, I cannot conceive what was the matter with us when we chose this green slip of the gallows-tree for our captain

of the district. To be sure, he did very well at first, and that robbery of the old lord was not ill-planned; but lately — ”

“Nay, nay,” quoth Augustus, interrupting the gigantic grumbler, “the nature of man is prone to discontent. Allow that our present design of setting up the gay Lothario, and trying our chances at Bath for an heiress, is owing as much to Lovett’s promptitude as to our invention.”

“And what good will come of it?” returned Ned, as he lighted his pipe. “answer me that. Was I not dressed as fine as a lord, and did not I walk three times up and down that great room without being a jot the better for it?”

“Ah! but you know not how many secret conquests you may have made: you cannot win a prize by looking upon it.”

“Humph!” grunted Ned, applying himself discontentedly to the young existence of his pipe.

“As for the captain’s partner,” renewed Tomlinson, who maliciously delighted in exciting the jealousy of the handsome “tax-collector,” for that was the designation by which Augustus thought proper to style himself and companions, — “I will turn Tory if she be not already half in love with him; and did you hear the old gentleman who cut into our rubber say what a fine fortune she had? Faith, Ned, it is lucky for us two that we all agreed to go shares in our marriage speculations; I fancy the worthy captain will think it a bad bargain for himself.”

“I am not so sure of that, Mr. Tomlinson,” said Long Ned, sourly eying his comrade. “Some women may be caught by a smooth skin and a showy manner, but *real* masculine beauty, eyes, color, and hair, — Mr.

Tomlinson, must ultimately make its way: so hand me the brandy and cease your jaw."

"Well, well," said Tomlinson. "I'll give you a toast, — 'The prettiest girl in England;' — and that's Miss Brandon!"

"You shall give no such toast, sir!" said Clifford, starting from the bench. "What the devil is Miss Brandon to you? And now, Ned" (seeing that the tall hero looked on him with an unfavorable aspect), "here's my hand, forgive me if I was uncivil. Tomlinson will tell you, in a maxim, men are changeable. Here's to your health; and it shall not be my fault, gentlemen, if we have not a merry evening!"

This speech, short as it was, met with great applause from the two friends; and Clifford, as president, stationed himself in a huge chair at the head of the table. Scarcely had he assumed this dignity before the door opened, and half-a-dozen of the gentlemen confederates trooped somewhat noisily into the apartment.

"Softly, softly, messieurs," said the president, recovering all his constitutional gayety, yet blending it with a certain negligent command, — "respect for the chair, if you please! 'Tis the way with all assemblies where the public purse is a matter of deferential interest!"

"Hear him!" cried Tomlinson.

"What, my old friend Bags!" said the president; "you have not come empty-handed, I will swear: your honest face is like the table of contents to the good things in your pockets!"

"Ah, Captain Clifford," said the veteran, groaning and shaking his reverend head, "I have seen the day when there was not a lad in England forked so largely, so comprehensively-like, as I did. But, as King Lear says at Common Garden, 'I be's old now!'"

"But your zeal is as youthful as ever, my fine fellow," said the captain, soothingly; "and if you do not clean out the public as thoroughly as heretofore, it is not the fault of your inclinations."

"No, that it is not," cried the "tax-collectors" unanimously. "And if ever a pocket is to be picked neatly, quietly, and effectually," added the complimentary Clifford, "I do not know to this day, throughout the three kingdoms, a neater, quieter, and more effective set of fingers than old Bags's!"

The veteran bowed disclaimingly, and took his seat, among the heartfelt good wishes of the whole assemblage.

"And now, gentlemen," said Clifford, as soon as the revellers had provided themselves with their wonted luxuries, potatory and fumous, "let us hear your adventures, and rejoice our eyes with their produce. The gallant Attie shall begin, — but first, a toast: 'May those who leap from a hedge never leap from a tree!'"

This toast being drunk with enthusiastic applause, Fighting Attie began the recital of his little history.

"You sees, captain," said he, putting himself in a martial position, and looking Clifford full in the face, "that I 'm not addicted to much blarney. Little cry and much wool is my motto. At ten o'clock A. M. saw the enemy, — in the shape of a doctor of divinity. 'Blow me,' says I to Old Bags, 'but I 'll do his reverence!' — 'Blow me,' says Old Bags, 'but you sha'n't; you 'll have us scragged if you touches the church.' — 'My grandmother!' says I. Bags tells the pals, — all in a fuss about it: what care I? — I puts on a decent dress, and goes to the doctor as a decayed soldier, *wot* supplies the shops in the turning line. His reverence — a fat jolly dog as ever you see — was at dinner over a

fine roast pig. So I tells him I have some bargains at home for him. Splice me if the doctor did not think he had got a prize! so he puts on his boots, and he comes with me to my house. But when I gets him into a lane, out come my pops. 'Give up, doctor,' says I; 'others must share the goods of the church now.' You has no idea what a row he made: but I did the thing, and there 's an end on 't."

"Bravo, Attie!" cried Clifford, and the word echoed round the board. Attie put a purse on the table, and the next gentleman was called to confession.

"It skills not, boots not," gentlest of readers, to record each of the narratives that now followed one another. Old Bags, in especial, preserved his well-earned reputation, by emptying six pockets, which had been filled with every possible description of petty valuables. Peasant and prince appeared alike to have come under his hands; and, perhaps, the good old man had done in one town more towards effecting an equality of goods among different ranks, than all the reformers from Cornwall to Carlisle. Yet so keen was his appetite for the sport, that the veteran appropriator absolutely burst into tears at not having "forked more."

"I love a warm-hearted enthusiasm," cried Clifford, handling the movables, while he gazed lovingly on the ancient purloiner: "may new cases never teach us to forget Old Bags!"

As soon as this "sentiment" had been duly drunk, and Mr. Bagshot had dried his tears, and applied himself to his favorite drink, — which, by the way, was "blue ruin," — the work of division took place. The discretion and impartiality of the captain in this arduous part of his duty, attracted universal admiration; and each gentleman having carefully pouched his share, the

youthful president hemmed thrice, and the society became aware of a purposed speech.

"Gentlemen!" began Clifford, — and his main supporter, the sapient Augustus, shouted out "Hear!" — "gentlemen, you all know that when, some months ago, you were pleased — partly at the instigation of Gentleman George, God bless him! — partly from the exaggerated good opinion expressed of me by my friends — to elect me to the high honor of the command of this district, I myself was by no means ambitious to assume that rank, which I knew well was far beyond my merits, and that responsibility, which I knew, with equal certainty, was too weighty for my powers. Your voices, however, overruled my own; and as Mr. Muddlepudd, the great metaphysician, in that excellent paper the 'Asinæum,' was wont to observe, 'the susceptibilities, innate, extensible, incomprehensible, and eternal,' existing in my bosom, were infinitely more powerful than the shallow suggestions of reason, — that ridiculous thing which all wise men and judicious Asinæans sedulously stifle."

"Plague take the man, what is he talking about?" said Long Ned, who we have seen was of an envious temper, in a whisper to Old Bags. Old Bags shook his head.

"In a word, gentlemen," renewed Clifford, "your kindness overpowered me; and, despite my cooler inclinations, I accepted your flattering proposal. Since then I have endeavored, so far as I have been able, to advance your interests: I have kept a vigilant eye upon all my neighbors; I have, from county to county, established numerous correspondents; and our exertions have been carried on with a promptitude that has insured success.

"Gentlemen, I do not wish to boast, but on these nights of periodical meetings, when every quarter brings us to go halves; when we meet in private to discuss the affairs of the public, — show our earnings, as it were, in privy council, and divide them amicably, as it were, in the cabinet ['Hear, hear!' from Mr. Tomlinson], it is customary for your captain for the time being to remind you of his services, engage your pardon for his deficiencies, and your good wishes for his future exertions. Gentlemen! has it ever been said of Paul Lovett that he heard of a prize and forgot to tell you of his news? ['Never! never!' loud cheering.] Has it ever been said of him that he sent others to seize the booty, and stayed at home to think how it should be spent? ['No! no!' repeated cheers.] Has it ever been said of him that he took less share than his due of your danger, and more of your guineas? [Cries in the negative, accompanied with vehement applause.] Gentlemen, I thank you for these flattering and audible testimonials in my favor; but the points on which I have dwelt, however necessary to my honor, would prove but little for my merits: they might be worthy notice in your comrade, — you demand more subtle duties in your chief. Gentlemen! has it ever been said of Paul Lovett that he sent out brave men on forlorn hopes; that he hazarded your own heads by *rash* attempts in acquiring pictures of King George's; that zeal, in short, was greater in him than caution, or that his love of a *quid*¹ ever made him neglectful of your just aversion to a *quod*?² [Unanimous cheering.]

"Gentlemen! since I have had the honor to preside over your welfare, fortune, which favors the bold, has not been unmerciful to you. But three of our com-

¹ Quid, — a guinea.

² Quod, — a prison.

panions have been missed from our peaceful festivities. One, gentlemen, I myself expelled from our corps for ungentlemanlike practices: he picked pockets of *fogles*,¹ — it was a vulgar employment. Some of you, gentlemen, have done the same for amusement, — Jack Littlefork did it for occupation. I expostulated with him in public and in private; Mr. Pepper cut his society; Mr. Tomlinson read him an essay on Real Greatness of Soul: all was in vain. He was pumped by the mob for the theft of a *bird's eye wipe*. The fault I had borne with, — the detection was unpardonable: I expelled him. Who's here so base as would be a *fogle-hunter*? If any, speak; for him have I offended! Who's here so rude as would not be a gentleman? If any, speak; for him have I offended! I pause for a reply! What, none! then none have I offended. [Loud cheers.] Gentlemen, I may truly add, that I have done no more to Jack Littlefork than you should do to Paul Lovett! The next vacancy in our ranks was occasioned by the loss of Patrick Blunderbull. You know, gentlemen, the vehement exertions I made to save that misguided creature, whom I had made exertions no less earnest to instruct. But he chose to swindle under the name of the 'Honorable Captain Smico;' the Peerage gave him the lie at once; his case was one of aggravation, and he was so remarkably ugly that he 'created no interest.' He left us for a foreign exile; and if, as a man, I lament him, I confess to you, gentlemen, as a 'tax-collector,' I am easily consoled.

"Our third loss must be fresh in your memory. Peter Popwell, as bold a fellow as ever breathed, is no more! [A movement in the assembly.] Peace be with him! He died on the field of battle, shot dead

¹ Handkerchiefs.

by a Scotch colonel whom poor Popwell thought to rob of nothing with an empty pistol. His memory, gentlemen, — in solemn silence!

"These make the catalogue of our losses" (resumed the youthful chief, so soon as the "red cup had crowned the memory" of Peter Popwell), — "I am proud, even in sorrow, to think that the blame of those losses rests not with me. And now, friends and followers! Gentlemen of the Road, the Street, the Theatre, and the Shop! Prigs, Toby-men, and Squires of the Cross! according to the laws of our society, I resign into your hands that power which for two quarterly terms you have confided to mine, ready to sink into your ranks as a comrade, nor unwilling to renounce the painful honor I have borne, — borne with much infirmity, it is true, but at least with a sincere desire to serve that cause with which you have intrusted me."

So saying, the captain descended from his chair amidst the most uproarious applause; and as soon as the first burst had partially subsided, Augustus Tomlinson, rising, with one hand in his breeches-pocket, and the other stretched out, said: —

"Gentlemen, I move that Paul Lovett be again chosen as our captain for the ensuing term of three months. [Deafening cheers.] Much might I say about his surpassing merits; but why dwell upon that which is obvious? Life is short! Why should speeches be long? Our lives, perhaps, are shorter than the lives of other men: why should not our harangues be of a suitable brevity? Gentlemen, I shall say but one word in favor of my excellent friend, — of mine, say I? — ay, of mine, of yours. He is a friend to all of us. A prime minister is not more useful to his followers, and more burdensome to the public, than, I am proud to

say, is — Paul Lovett! [Loud plaudits.] What I shall urge in his favor is simply this: the man whom opposite parties unite in praising must have supereminent merit. Of all your companions, gentlemen, Paul Lovett is the only man who to that merit can advance a claim. [Applause.] You all know, gentlemen, that our body has long been divided into two factions, — each jealous of the other, each desirous of ascendancy, and each emulous which shall put the greatest number of fingers into the public pie. In the language of the vulgar, the one faction would be called ‘swindlers,’ and the other, ‘highwaymen.’ I, gentlemen, who am fond of finding new names for things and for persons, and am a bit of a politician, call the one *Whigs* and the other *Tories*. [Clamorous cheering.] Of the former body, I am esteemed no unimportant member: of the latter faction, Mr. Bags is justly considered the most shining ornament. Mr. Attie and Mr. Edward Pepper can scarcely be said to belong entirely to either: they unite the good qualities of both, — ‘British compounds’ some term them; I term them *Liberal Aristocrats!* [Cheers.] I now call upon you all, Whig or Swindler; Tory or Highwayman; ‘British Compounds’ or Liberal Aristocrats, — I call upon you all, to name me one man whom you will all agree to elect!”

All: “Lovett forever!”

“Gentlemen!” continued the sagacious Augustus, “that shout is sufficient; without another word, I propose, as your captain, Mr. Paul Lovett.”

“And I seconds the motion!” said old Mr. Bags.

Our hero, being now, by the unanimous applause of his confederates, restored to the chair of office, returned thanks in a neat speech; and Scarlet Jem declared with

great solemnity, that it did equal honor to his head and heart.

The thunders of eloquence being hushed, *flashes of lightning*, or, as the vulgar say, "glasses of gin," gleamed about. Good old Mr. Bags stuck, however, to his blue ruin, and Attie to the bottle of bingo; some, among whom were Clifford and the wise Augustus, called for wine; and Clifford, who exerted himself to the utmost in supporting the gay duties of his station, took care that the song should vary the pleasures of the bowl. Of the songs we have only been enabled to preserve two. The first is by Long Ned; and, though we confess we can see but little in it, yet (perhaps from some familiar allusion or another, with which we are necessarily unacquainted) it produced a prodigious sensation, — it ran thus: —

THE ROGUE'S RECIPE.

Your honest fool a rogue to make,
As great as can be seen, sir, —
Two hackneyed rogues you first must take,
Then place your fool between, sir.

Virtue 's a dunghill cock, ashamed
Of self when paired with game ones;
And wildest elephants are tamed
If stuck betwixt two tame ones.

The other effusion with which we have the honor to favor our readers is a very amusing duet which took place between Fighting Attie and a tall, thin robber, who was a dangerous fellow in a mob, and was therefore called Mobbing Francis; it was commenced by the latter: —

MOBBING FRANCIS.

"The best of all robbers as ever I knowed,
 Is the bold Fighting Attie, the pride of the road ! —
 Fighting Attie, my hero, I saw you to-day
 A purse full of yellow boys seize ;
 And as, just at present, *I'm low in the lay*,
 I'll borrow a *quid*, if you please.
 Oh! bold Fighting Attie, — the knowing, the natty,
 By us all it must sure be confessed,
 Though your shoppers and snobbers are pretty good robbers,
 A soldier is always the best."

FIGHTING ATTIE.

"*Stubble your whids*,¹
 You wants to trick I.
 Lend you my *quids* ?
 Not one, by Dickey."

MOBBING FRANCIS.

"Oh, what a beast is a niggardly ruffler,
 Nabbing, grabbing all for himself ;
 Hang it, old fellow, I'll hit you a muffler,
 Since you won't give me a pinch of the pelf,
 You has not a heart for the *general distress* —
 You cares not a mag if our party should fall,
 And if Scarlet Jem were not good at a press,
 By Goles, it would soon be all up with us all ! —
 Oh, Scarlet Jem, he is trusty and trim,
 Like his wig to his poll, sticks his conscience to him :
 But I vows I despises the fellow who prizes
 More his own ends than the popular stock, sir ;
 And the soldier as bones for himself and his crones,
 Should be boned like a traitor himself at the block, sir."

¹ Hold your tongue.

This severe response of Mobbing Francis's did not in the least ruffle the constitutional calmness of Fighting Attie; but the wary Clifford, seeing that Francis had lost his temper, and watchful over the least sign of disturbance among the company, instantly called for another song, and Mobbing Francis sullenly knocked down Old Bags.

The night was far gone, and so were the wits of the honest tax-gatherers, when the president commanded silence, and the convivialists knew that their chief was about to issue forth the orders for the ensuing term. Nothing could be better timed than such directions, — during merriment, and before oblivion.

"Gentlemen," said the captain, "I will now, with your leave, impart to you all the plans I have formed for each. You, Attie, shall repair to London: be the Windsor road and the purlieus of Pinlico your especial care. Look you, my hero, to these letters; they will apprise you of much work. I need not caution you to silence: like the oyster, you never open your mouth but for something. Honest Old Bags, a rich grazier will be in Smithfield on Thursday; his name is Hodges, and he will have somewhat like a thousand pounds in his pouch. He is green, fresh, and avaricious; offer to assist him in defrauding his neighbors in a bargain, and cease not till thou hast *done* that with him which he wished to do to others. Be — excellent old man — like the frog-fish, which fishes for other fishes with two horns that resemble baits; the prey dart at the horns, and are down the throat in an instant! For thee, dearest Jem, these letters announce a prize: fat is Parson Pliant; full is his purse; and he rides from Henley to Oxford on Friday, — I need say no more! As for the rest of you, gentlemen, on this paper you will see

your destinations fixed. I warrant you, ye will find enough work till we meet again this day three months. Myself, Augustus Tomlinson, and Ned Pepper, remain at Bath; we have business in hand, gentlemen, of paramount importance; should you by accident meet us, never acknowledge us, — we are *incog.*; striking at high game, and putting on falcon's plumes to do it in character, — you understand; but this accident can scarcely occur, for none of you will remain at Bath; by to-morrow night may the road receive you. And now, gentlemen, speed the glass, and I'll give you a sentiment by way of a spur to it, —

'Much sweeter than honey
Is other men's money!'

Our hero's maxim was received with all the enthusiasm which agreeable truisms usually create, and old Mr. Bags rose to address the chair: unhappily for the edification of the audience, the veteran's foot slipped, — before he had proceeded farther than "Mr. President," he fell to the earth with a sort of reel, —

"Like shooting stars, he fell to rise no more!"

His body became a capital footstool for the luxurious Pepper. Now Augustus Tomlinson and Clifford, exchanging looks, took every possible pains to promote the hilarity of the evening; and, before the third hour of morning had sounded, they had the satisfaction of witnessing the effects of their benevolent labors in the prostrate forms of all their companions. Long Ned, naturally more capacious than the rest, succumbed the last.

"As leaves of trees," said the chairman, waving his hand, —

"As leaves of trees the race of man is found,
Now *fresh with dew*, now withering on the ground."

"Well said, my Hector of Highways!" cried Tomlinson; and then helping himself to the wine, while he employed his legs in removing the supine forms of Scarlet Jem and Long Ned, he continued the Homeric quotation, with a pompous and self-gratulatory tone, —

"So flourish *these* when *those* have passed away!"

"We managed to get rid of our friends —" began Clifford.

"Like Whigs in place," interrupted the politician.

"Right, Tomlinson, thanks to the milder properties of our drink, and, perchance, to the stronger qualities of our heads; and now tell me, my friend, what think you of our chance of success? Shall we catch an heiress or not?"

"Why, really," said Tomlinson, "women are like those calculations in arithmetic which one can never bring to an exact account: for my part, I shall stuff my calves, and look out for a widow. You, my good fellow, seem to stand a fair chance with Miss —"

"Oh, name her not!" cried Clifford, coloring even through the flush which wine had spread over his countenance. "Ours are not the lips by which her name should be breathed; and, faith, when I think of her, I do it anonymously."

"What! *have* you ever thought of her before this evening?"

"Yes, for months," answered Clifford. "You remember some time ago, when we formed the plan for robbing Lord Mauleverer, how, rather for frolic than profit, you robbed Dr. Slopperton, of Warlock, while I compassionately walked home with the old gentleman. Well,

at the parson's house I met Miss Brandon, — mind, if I speak of her by name, *you* must not; and, by Heaven — but I won't swear — I accompanied her home. You know, before morning we robbed Lord Mauleverer: the affair made a noise, and I feared to endanger you all if I appeared in the vicinity of the robbery. Since then, business diverted my thoughts; we formed the plan of trying a matrimonial speculation at Bath. I came hither; guess my surprise at seeing *her* — ”

“And your delight,” added Tomlinson, “at hearing she is as rich as she is pretty.”

“No!” answered Clifford, quickly, “that thought gives me no pleasure, — you stare. I will try and explain. You know, dear Tomlinson, I'm not much of a canter, and yet my heart shrinks when I look on that innocent face, and hear that soft, happy voice, and think that my love to her can be only ruin and disgrace: nay, that my very address is contamination, and my very glance towards her an insult.”

“Hey-day!” quoth Tomlinson; “have you been under my instructions, and learned the true value of words, and can you have any scruples left on so easy a point of conscience? True, you may call your representing yourself to her as an unprofessional gentleman, and so winning her affections, deceit; but why call it deceit, when a ‘*genius for intrigue*’ is so much neater a phrase? In like manner, by marrying the young lady, if you say *you have ruined her*, you justly deserve to be annihilated; but why not say you have ‘*saved yourself*’? — and then, my dear fellow, you will have done the most justifiable thing in the world.”

“Pish, man!” said Clifford, peevishly; “none of thy sophisms and sneers!”

"By the soul of Sir Edward Coke, I am serious! But look you, my friend, this is not a matter where it is *convenient* to have a tender-footed conscience. You see these fellows on the ground! — all d—d clever, and so forth; but you and I are of a different order. I have had a classical education, seen the world, and mixed in decent society; you, too, had not been long a member of our club before you distinguished yourself above us all. Fortune smiled on your youthful audacity. You grew particular in horses and dress, frequented public haunts, and, being a deuced good-looking fellow, with an inborn air of gentility, and some sort of education, you became sufficiently well received to acquire in a short time the manner and tone of a — what shall I say? — a gentleman, and the taste to like suitable associates. This is my case too! Despite our labors for the public weal, the ungrateful dogs see that we are above them; a single envious breast is sufficient to give us to the hangman; we have agreed that we are in danger, we have agreed to make an honorable retreat, — we cannot do so without money; you know the vulgar distich among our set: nothing can be truer, —

‘Hanging is ’nation
More nice than starvation!’

You will not carry off some of the common stock, though I think you justly might, considering how much you have put into it. What, then, shall we do? Work we cannot! beg we will not! And, between you and me, we are cursedly extravagant! What remains but marriage?"

"It is true!" said Clifford, with a half sigh.

"You may well sigh, my good fellow: marriage is a lackadaisical proceeding at best; but there is no re-

source: and now when you have got a liking to a young lady who is as rich as a she-Cræsus, and so gilded the pill as bright as a lord mayor's coach, what the devil have you to do with scruples?"

Clifford made no answer, and there was a long pause; perhaps he would not have spoken so frankly as he had done, if the wine had not opened his heart.

"How proud," renewed Tomlinson, "the good old matron at Thames Court will be if you marry a lady! You have not seen her lately?"

"Not for years," answered our hero. "Poor old soul! I believe that she is well in health, and I take care that she should not be poor in pocket."

"But why not visit her? Perhaps, like all great men, especially of a liberal turn of mind, you are ashamed of old friends, eh?"

"My good fellow, is that like me? Why, you know the beaux of our set look askant on me for not keeping up my dignity, robbing only in company with a well-dressed gentleman, and swindling under the name of a lord's nephew; no, my reasons are these: first, you must know that the old dame had set her heart upon my turning out an honest man."

"And so you have!" interrupted Augustus; "honest to your party: what more would you have from either prig or politician?"

"I believe," continued Clifford, not heeding the interruption, "that my poor mother, before she died, desired that I might be reared honestly; and, strange as it may seem to you, Dame Lobkins is a conscientious woman in her own way, — it is not her fault if I have turned out as I have done. Now, I know well that it would grieve her to the quick to see me what I am. Secondly, my friend, under my new names, various as

they are, — Jackson and Howard, Russell and Pig-wiggin, Villiers and Gotobed, Cavendish and Solomons, — you may well suppose that the good persons in the neighborhood of Thames Court have no suspicion that the adventurous and accomplished ruffler, at present captain of this district, under the new appellation of Lovett, is in reality no other than the obscure and surnameless Paul of the ‘Mug.’ Now you and I, Augustus, have read human nature, though in the *black-letter*; and I know well that were I to make my appearance in Thames Court, and were the old lady (as she certainly would, not from unkindness, but insobriety; not that she loves me less, but heavy wet more) to divulge the secret of that appearance — ”

“You know well,” interrupted the vivacious Tomlinson, “that the identity of your former meanness with your present greatness would be easily traced; the envy and jealousy of your early friends aroused; a hint of your whereabouts and your aliases given to the police, and yourself grabbed, with a slight possibility of a hempen consummation.”

“You conceive me exactly!” answered Clifford: “the fact is, that I have observed in nine cases out of ten our bravest fellows have been taken off by the treachery of some early sweetheart, or the envy of some boyish friend. My destiny is not yet fixed; I am worthy of better things than a ride in the cart with a nosegay in my hand; and, though I care not much about death in itself, I am resolved if possible not to die a highwayman: hence my caution, and that prudential care for secrecy and safe asylums, which men, less wise than you, have so often thought an unnatural contrast to my conduct on the road.”

“Fools!” said the philosophical Tomlinson; “what

has the bravery of a warrior to do with his insuring his house from fire?"

"However," said Clifford, "I send my good nurse a fine gift every now and then, to assure her of my safety; and thus, notwithstanding my absence, I show my affection by my *presents*, — excuse a pun."

"And have you never been detected by any of your quondam associates?"

"Never! — remember in what a much more elevated sphere of life I have been thrown; and who could recognize the scamp Paul with a fustian jacket in gentleman Paul with a laced waistcoat? Besides, I have diligently avoided every place where I was likely to encounter those who saw me in childhood. You know how little I frequent flash houses, and how scrupulous I am in admitting new confederates into our band; you and Pepper are the only two of my associates (save my *protégé*, as you express it, who never deserts the cave) that possess a knowledge of my identity with the lost Paul; and as ye have both taken that dread oath to silence, which to disobey, until, indeed, I be in the jail or on the gibbet, is almost to be assassinated, I consider my secret is little likely to be broken, save with my own consent."

"True," said Augustus, nodding: "one more glass, and to bed, Mr. Chairman."

"I pledge you, my friend; our last glass shall be philanthropically quaffed: 'All fools, and may their money soon be parted!'"

"All fools!" cried Tomlinson, filling a bumper; "but I quarrel with the wisdom of your toast, — may fools be rich, and rogues will never be poor! I would make a better livelihood off a rich fool than a landed estate."

So saying, the contemplative and ever-sagacious Tomlinson tossed off his bumper; and the pair, having kindly rolled by pedal applications the body of Long Ned into a safe and quiet corner of the room, mounted the stairs, arm-in-arm, in search of somnambular accommodations.

CHAPTER XVII.

That contrast of the hardened and mature,
The calm brow brooding o'er the project dark,
With the clear, loving heart and spirit pure
Of youth, I love, — yet, hating, love to mark!

H. FLETCHER.

ON the forenoon of the day after the ball, the carriage of William Brandon, packed and prepared, was at the door of his abode at Bath; meanwhile the lawyer was closeted with his brother. "My dear Joseph," said the barrister, "I do not leave you without being fully sensible of your kindness evinced to me, both in coming hither, contrary to your habits, and accompanying me everywhere, despite of your tastes."

"Mention it not, my dear William," said the kind-hearted squire, "for your delightful society is to me the most agreeable (and that's what I can say of very few people like you; for, for my own part, I generally find the cleverest men *the most unpleasant*) *in the world!* And I think lawyers in particular (very different, indeed, from your tribe *you are!*) *perfectly intolerable!*"

"I have now," said Brandon, who with his usual nervous quickness of action was walking with rapid strides to and fro the apartment, and scarcely noted his brother's compliment, — "I have now another favor to request of you. Consider this house and these servants yours for the next month or two at least. Don't interrupt me: it is no compliment, — I speak for our family benefit." And then seating himself next to his brother's arm-

chair, for a fit of the gout made the squire a close prisoner, Brandon unfolded to his brother his cherished scheme of marrying Lucy to Lord Mauleverer. Notwithstanding the constancy of the earl's attentions to the heiress, the honest squire had never dreamed of their palpable object; and he was overpowered with surprise when he heard the lawyer's expectations.

"But, my dear brother," he began, "so great a match for my Lucy, the Lord-Lieutenant of the Coun —"

"And what of that?" cried Brandon, proudly, and interrupting his brother; "is not the race of Brandon, which has matched its scions with royalty, far nobler than that of the upstart stock of Mauleverer? What is there presumptuous in the hope that the descendant of the Earls of Suffolk should regild a faded name with some of the precious dust of the quondam silversmiths of London? Besides," he continued, after a pause, "Lucy will be rich, very rich, and before two years my rank may possibly be of the same order as Mauleverer's!"

The squire stared; and Brandon, not giving him time to answer, resumed. It is needless to detail the conversation; suffice it to say that the artful barrister did not leave his brother till he had gained his point, — till Joseph Brandon had promised to remain at Bath in possession of the house and establishment of his brother; to throw no impediment on the suit of Mauleverer; to cultivate society as before; and, above all, not to alarm Lucy, who evidently did not yet favor Mauleverer exclusively, by hinting to her the hopes and expectations of her uncle and father. Brandon, now taking leave of his brother, mounted to the drawing-room in search of Lucy. He found her leaning over the gilt cage of one of her feathered favorites, and speaking to the little inmate in that pretty and playful language in

which all thoughts, innocent, yet fond, should be clothed. So beautiful did Lucy seem, as she was thus engaged in her girlish and caressing employment, and so utterly unlike one meet to be the instrument of ambitious designs and the sacrifice of worldly calculations, that Brandon paused, suddenly smitten at heart, as he beheld her: he was not, however, slow in recovering himself; he approached. "Happy he," said the man of the world, "for whom caresses and words like these are reserved!"

Lucy turned. "It is ill!" she said, pointing to the bird, which sat, with its feathers stiff and erect, mute and heedless even of that voice which was as musical as its own.

"Poor prisoner!" said Brandon; "even gilt cages and sweet tones cannot compensate to thee for the loss of the air and the wild woods!"

"But," said Lucy, anxiously, "it is not confinement which makes it ill. If you think so, I will release it instantly."

"How long have you had it?" asked Brandon.

"For three years," said Lucy.

"And is it your *chief* favorite?"

"Yes: it does not sing so prettily as the other; but it is far more sensible, and *so* affectionate."

"Can you release it then?" asked Brandon, smiling. "Would it not be better to see it die in your custody, than to let it live and to see it no more?"

"Oh, no, no!" said Lucy, eagerly; "when I love any one, anything, I wish that to be happy, not me."

As she said this, she took the bird from the cage, and bearing it to the open window, kissed it, and held it on her hand in the air. The poor bird turned a languid and sickly eye around it, as if the sight of the crowded

houses and busy streets presented nothing familiar or inviting; and it was not till Lucy, with a tender courage, shook it gently from her, that it availed itself of the proffered liberty. It flew first to an opposite balcony; and then recovering from a short, and, as it were, surprised pause, took a brief circuit above the houses; and after disappearing for a few minutes, flew back, circled the window, and, re-entering, settled once more on the fair form of its mistress and nestled into her bosom.

Lucy covered it with kisses. "You see it will not leave me!" said she.

"Who can?" said the uncle, warmly, charmed for the moment from every thought but that of kindness for the young and soft creature before him, — "who can," he repeated with a sigh, "but an old and withered ascetic like myself? I must leave you indeed; see, my carriage is at the door! Will my beautiful niece, among the gayeties that surround her, condescend now and then to remember the crabbed lawyer, and assure him by a line of her happiness and health? Though I rarely write any notes but those upon cases, *you*, at least, may be sure of an answer. And tell me, Lucy, if there be in all this city one so foolish as to think that these idle gems, useful only as a vent for my pride in you, can add a single charm to a beauty above all ornament?"

So saying, Brandon produced a leathern case; and, touching a spring, the imperial flash of diamonds, which would have made glad many a patrician heart, broke dazzlingly on Lucy's eyes.

"No thanks, Lucy," said Brandon, in answer to his niece's disclaiming and shrinking gratitude; "I do honor to myself, not you; and now, bless you, my dear girl. Farewell! Should any occasion present itself in which

you require an immediate adviser, at once kind and wise, I beseech you, my dearest Lucy, as a parting request, to have no scruples in consulting Lord Mauleverer. Besides his friendship for me, he is much interested in you, and you may consult him with the more safety and assurance, because" (and the lawyer smiled) "he is perhaps the only man in the world whom my Lucy could not make in love with her. His gallantry may appear adulation, but it is never akin to love. Promise me that you will not hesitate in this."

Lucy gave the promise readily, and Brandon continued, in a careless tone, "I hear that you danced last night with a young gentleman whom no one knew and whose companions bore a very strange appearance. In a place like Bath, society is too mixed not to render the greatest caution in forming acquaintances absolutely necessary. You must pardon me, my dearest niece, if I remark, that a young lady owes it not only to herself, but to her relations, to observe the most rigid circumspection of conduct. This is a wicked world, and the peach-like bloom of character is easily rubbed away. In these points Mauleverer can be of great use to you. His knowledge of character, his penetration into men, and his tact in manners, are unerring. Pray, be guided by him: whomsoever he warns you against, you may be sure is unworthy of your acquaintance. God bless you! You *will* write to me often and frankly, dear Lucy; tell me all that happens to you, all that interests, — nay, all that displeases."

Brandon then, who had seemingly disregarded the blushes with which, during his speech, Lucy's cheeks had been spread, folded his niece in his arms, and hurried, as if to hide his feelings, into his carriage. When the horses had turned the street, he directed the pos-

tilions to stop at Lord Mauleverer's. "Now," said he to himself, "if I can get this clever coxcomb to second my schemes, and play according to my game, and not according to his own vanity, I shall have a knight of the garter for my nephew-in-law!"

Meanwhile Lucy, all in tears, for she loved her uncle greatly, ran down to the squire to show him Brandon's magnificent present.

"Ah!" said the squire, with a sigh, "few men were born with more good, generous, and great qualities (pity only that his chief desire was to get on in the world: for my part, I think *no motive makes greater and more cold-hearted rogues*) than my brother William!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Why did she love him ? — Curious fool, be still !
Is human love the growth of human will ?
To her he might be gentleness.

LORD BYRON.

IN three weeks from the time of his arrival, Captain Clifford was the most admired man in Bath. It is true, the gentlemen, who have a quicker tact as to the respectability of their own sex than women, might have looked a little shy upon him, had he not himself especially shunned appearing intrusive, and indeed rather avoided the society of men than courted it: so that after he had fought a duel with a baronet (the son of a shoemaker), who called him *one* Clifford, and had exhibited a flea-bitten horse, allowed to be the finest in Bath, he rose insensibly into a certain degree of respect with the one sex, as well as popularity with the other. But what always attracted and kept alive suspicion, was his intimacy with so peculiar and *dashing* a gentleman as Mr. Edward Pepper. People could get over a certain frankness in Clifford's address, but the most lenient were astounded by the swagger of Long Ned. Clifford, however, not insensible to the ridicule attached to his acquaintances, soon managed to pursue his occupations alone; nay, he took a lodging to himself, and left Long Ned and Augustus Tomlinson (the latter to operate as a check on the former) to the quiet enjoyment of the hairdresser's apartments. He himself attended all public gayeties; and his mien, and the appearance of wealth which he maintained, procured him access into several

private circles, which pretended to be exclusive, — as if people who had daughters ever could be exclusive! Many were the kind looks, nor few the inviting letters which he received; and if his sole object had been to marry an heiress, he would have found no difficulty in attaining it. But he devoted himself entirely to Lucy Brandon; and to win one glance from her, he would have renounced all the heiresses in the kingdom. Most fortunately for him, Mauleverer, whose health was easily deranged, had fallen ill the very day William Brandon left Bath; and his lordship was thus rendered unable to watch the movements of Lucy, and undermine, or totally prevent the success of her lover. Miss Brandon, indeed, had at first, melted by the kindness of her uncle, and struck with the sense of his admonition (for she was no self-willed young lady, who was determined to be in love), received Captain Clifford's advances with a coldness which, from her manner the first evening they had met at Bath, occasioned him no less surprise than mortification. He retreated, and recoiled on the squire, who, patient and bold, as usual, was sequestered in his favorite corner. By accident, Clifford trod on the squire's gouty digital; and in apologizing for the offence was so struck by the old gentleman's good-nature, and peculiarity of expressing himself, that, without knowing who he was, he entered into conversation with him. There was an off-hand sort of liveliness and candor, not to say wit, about Clifford, which always had a charm for the elderly, who generally like frankness above all the cardinal virtues; the squire was exceedingly pleased with him. The acquaintance, once begun, was naturally continued without difficulty when Clifford ascertained who was his new friend; and next morning, meeting in the pump-room, the squire asked Clifford to

dinner. The *entrée* to the house thus gained, the rest was easy. Long before Mauleverer recovered his health, the mischief effected by his rival was almost beyond redress; and the heart of the pure, the simple, the affectionate Lucy Brandon was more than half lost to the lawless and vagrant cavalier who officiates as the hero of this tale.

One morning Clifford and Augustus strolled out together. "Let us," said the latter, who was in a melancholy mood, "leave the busy streets, and indulge in a philosophical conversation on the nature of man, while we are enjoying a little fresh air in the country." Clifford assented to the proposal, and the pair slowly sauntered up one of the hills that surround the city of Bladud.

"There are certain moments," said Tomlinson, looking pensively down at his kerseymere gaiters, "when we are like the fox in the nursery rhyme, 'The fox had a wound, he could not tell where,' — we feel extremely unhappy, and we cannot tell *why*! — a dark and sad melancholy grows over us; we shun the face of man; we wrap ourselves in our thoughts like silkworms; we mutter fag-ends of dismal songs; tears come into our eyes; we recall all the misfortunes that have ever happened to us; we stoop in our gait, and bury our hands in our breeches-pockets; we say, 'What is life? — a stone to be shied into a horse-pond!' We pine for some congenial heart, and have an itching desire to talk prodigiously about ourselves; all *other* subjects seem weary, stale, and unprofitable: we feel as if a fly could knock us down, and are in a humor to fall in love, and make a very sad piece of business of it. Yet, with all this weakness, we have, at these moments, a finer opinion of ourselves than we ever had before. We call

our megrims the melancholy of a sublime soul; the yearnings of an indigestion we denominate yearnings after immortality, — nay, sometimes ‘a proof of the nature of the soul!’ May I find some biographer who understands such sensations well, and may he style those melting emotions the offspring of the poetical character,¹ which, in reality, are the offspring of ‘a mutton chop’!”

“You jest pleasantly enough on your low spirits,” said Clifford; “but I have a cause for mine.”

“What then?” cried Tomlinson, “so much the easier is it to cure them. The mind can cure the evils that spring *from* the mind; it is only a fool and a quack and a driveller, when it professes to heal the evils that spring from the body: *my* blue devils spring from the body, — consequently my mind, which, as you know, is a particularly wise mind, wrestles not against them. Tell me frankly,” renewed Augustus, after a pause, “do you ever repent? Do you ever think, if you had been a shopboy with a white apron about your middle, that you would have been a happier and a better member of society than you now are?”

“Repent!” said Clifford, fiercely; and his answer opened more of his secret heart, its motives, its reasonings, and its peculiarities, than were often discernible. “Repent! — that is the idlest word in our language.

¹ Vide Moore’s “Life of Byron,” in which it is satisfactorily shown that, if a man fast forty-eight hours, then eat three lobsters, and drink Heaven knows how many bottles of claret, — if, when he wakes the next morning, he sees himself abused as a demon by half the periodicals of the country; if, in a word, he be broken in his health, irregular in his habits, unfortunate in his affairs, unhappy in his home; and if then he should be so extremely eccentric as to be low-spirited and misanthropical, the low spirits and the misanthropy are by no means to be attributed to the above agreeable circumstances, but — God wot — to the “poetical character”!

No, — the moment I repent, that moment I reform. Never can it seem to me an atonement for crime merely to regret it; my mind would lead me not to regret, but to repair! Repent! — no, not yet. The older I grow, the more I see of men and of the callings of social life, the more I, an open knave, sicken at the glossed and covert dishonesties around. I acknowledge no allegiance to society. From my birth to this hour, I have received no single favor from its customs or its laws; openly I war against it, and patiently will I meet its revenge. This may be crime; but it looks light in my eyes when I gaze around, and survey on all sides the masked traitors who acknowledge large debts to society; who profess to obey its laws, adore its institutions, and, above all — oh, how righteously! — attack all those who attack it, and who yet lie, and cheat, and defraud, and peculate: publicly reaping all the comforts, privately filching all the profits. Repent! — of what? I come into the world friendless and poor. I find a body of laws hostile to the friendless and the poor! To those laws hostile to me, then, I acknowledge hostility in my turn. Between us are the conditions of war. Let them expose a weakness, I insist on my right to seize the advantage. Let them defeat me, and I allow their right to destroy.”¹

“Passion,” said Augustus, coolly, “is the usual enemy of reason; in your case it is the friend.”

The pair had now gained the summit of a hill which commanded a view of the city below. Here Augustus, who was a little short-winded, paused to recover breath. As soon as he had done so, he pointed with his forefinger to the scene beneath, and said, enthusiastically, “What a subject for contemplation!”

¹ The author need not, he hopes, observe that these sentiments are Mr. Paul Clifford’s, — not his.

Clifford was about to reply, when suddenly the sound of laughter and voices was heard behind. "Let us fly!" cried Augustus; "on this day of spleen, man delights me not, — nor woman either."

"Stay," said Clifford, in a trembling accent; for among those voices he recognized one which had already acquired over him an irresistible and bewitching power. Augustus sighed, and reluctantly remained motionless. Presently a winding in the road brought into view a party of pleasure, some on foot, some on horseback, others in the little vehicles which even at that day haunted watering-places, and called themselves "Flies" or "Swallows."

But among the gay procession Clifford had only eyes for one! Walking with that elastic step which so rarely survives the first epoch of youth, by the side of the heavy chair in which her father was drawn, the fair beauty of Lucy Brandon threw, at least in the eyes of her lover, a magic and a lustre over the whole group. He stood for a moment, stilling the heart that leaped at her bright looks and the gladness of her innocent laugh; and then, recovering himself, he walked slowly, and with a certain consciousness of the effect of his own singularly handsome person, towards the party. The good squire received him with his usual kindness, and informed him, according to that *lucidus ordo* which he so especially favored, of the whole particulars of their excursion. There was something worthy of an artist's sketch in the scene at that moment: the old squire in his chair, with his benevolent face turned towards Clifford, and his hands resting on his cane; Clifford himself bowing down his stately head to hear the details of the father; the beautiful daughter on the other side of the chair, her laugh suddenly stilled, her gait insensibly more com-

posed, and blush chasing blush over the smooth and peach-like loveliness of her cheek; the party, of all sizes, ages, and attire, affording ample scope for the caricaturist; and the pensive figure of Augustus Tomlinson (who, by the by, was exceedingly like Liston) standing apart from the rest, on the brow of the hill where Clifford had left him, and moralizing on the motley procession, with one hand hid in his waistcoat, and the other caressing his chin, which slowly and pendulously with the rest of his head moved up and down.

As the party approached the brow of the hill, the view of the city below was so striking that there was a general pause for the purpose of survey. One young lady in particular drew forth her pencil, and began sketching, while her mamma looked complacently on, and abstractedly devoured a sandwich. It was at this time in the general pause that Clifford and Lucy found themselves — Heaven knows how! — next to each other, and at a sufficient distance from the squire and the rest of the party to feel in some measure alone. There was a silence in both which neither dared to break; when Lucy, after looking at and toying with a flower that she had brought from the place which the party had been to see, accidentally dropped it; and Clifford and herself stooping at the same moment to recover it, their hands met. Involuntarily, Clifford detained the soft fingers in his own; his eyes, that encountered hers, so spell-bound and arrested them, that for once they did not sink beneath his gaze; his lips moved, but many and vehement emotions so suffocated his voice that no sound escaped them. But all the heart was in the eyes of each; that moment fixed their destinies. Henceforth there was an era from which they dated a new existence; a nucleus around which their thoughts, their remem-

branches, and their passions clung. The great gulf was passed; they stood on the same shore, and felt that, though still apart and disunited, on that shore was no living creature but themselves! Meanwhile Augustus Tomlinson, on finding himself surrounded by persons eager to gaze and to listen, broke from his moodiness and reserve. Looking full at his next neighbor, and flourishing his right hand in the air till he suffered it to rest in the direction of the houses and chimneys below, he repeated that moral exclamation which had been wasted on Clifford, with a more solemn and a less passionate gravity than before, —

“What a subject, ma’am, for contemplation!”

“Very sensibly said, indeed, sir,” said the lady addressed, who was rather of a serious turn.

“I never,” resumed Augustus in a louder key, and looking round for auditors, — “I never see a great town from the top of a hill without thinking of an apothecary’s shop.”

“Lord, sir!” said the lady. Tomlinson’s end was gained: struck with the quaintness of the notion, a little crowd gathered instantly around him, to hear it further developed.

“Of an apothecary’s shop, ma’am,” repeated Tomlinson. “There lie your simples and your purges and your cordials and your poisons; all things to heal, and to strengthen, and to destroy. There are drugs enough in that collection to save you, to cure you all; but none of you know how to use them, nor what medicines to ask for, nor what portions to take; so that the greater part of you swallow a wrong dose, and die of the remedy.”

“But if the town be the apothecary’s shop, what, in the plan of your idea, stands for the apothecary?” asked

an old gentleman, who perceived at what Tomlinson was driving.

"The apothecary, sir," answered Augustus, stealing his notion from Clifford, and sinking his voice, lest the true proprietor should overhear him, — Clifford was otherwise employed, — "the apothecary, sir, is the LAW! It is the law that stands behind the counter, and dispenses to each man the dose he should take. To the poor, it gives bad drugs gratuitously; to the rich, pills to stimulate the appetite: to the latter, premiums for luxury; to the former, only speedy refuges from life! Alas! either your apothecary is but an ignorant quack, or his science itself is but in its cradle. He blunders as much as you would do if left to your own selection. Those who have recourse to him seldom speak gratefully of his skill. He relieves you, it is true, — but of your money, not your malady; and the only branch of his profession in which he is an adept, is that which enables him to *bleed* you! — O Mankind!" continued Augustus, "what noble creatures you ought to be! You have keys to all sciences, all arts, all mysteries, but one! You have not a notion how you ought to be governed! — you cannot frame a tolerable law for the life and soul of you! You make yourselves as uncomfortable as you can by all sorts of galling and vexatious institutions, and you throw the blame upon 'fate.' You lay down rules it is impossible to comprehend, much less to obey; and you call each other monsters, because you cannot conquer the impossibility! You invent all sorts of vices, under pretence of making laws for preserving virtue; and the anomalous artificialities of conduct yourselves produce, you say you are born with: you make a machine by the perversest art you can think of, and you call it, with

a sigh, 'Human Nature.' With a host of good dispositions struggling at your breasts, you insist upon libelling the Almighty, and declaring that He meant you to be wicked. Nay, you even call the man mischievous and seditious who begs and implores you to be one jot better than you are. O Mankind! you are like a nosegay bought at Covent Garden. The flowers are lovely, the scent delicious. Mark that glorious hue! contemplate that bursting petal! — how beautiful, how redolent of health, of nature, of the dew and breath and blessing of heaven, are you all! But as for the dirty piece of string that ties you together, one would think you had picked it out of the kennel!"

So saying, Tomlinson turned on his heel, broke away from the crowd, and solemnly descended the hill. The party of pleasure slowly followed; and Clifford, receiving an invitation from the squire to partake of his family dinner, walked by the side of Lucy, and felt as if his spirit were drunk with the airs of Eden.

A brother squire, who, among the gayeties of Bath, was almost as forlorn as Joseph Brandon himself, partook of the Lord of Warlock's hospitality. When the three gentlemen adjourned to the drawing-room, the two elder sat down to a game at backgammon, and Clifford was left to the undisturbed enjoyment of Lucy's conversation. She was sitting by the window when Clifford joined her. On the table by her side were scattered books, the charm of which (they were chiefly poetry) she had only of late learned to discover; *there* also were strewn various little masterpieces of female ingenuity, in which the fairy fingers of Lucy Brandon were especially formed to excel. The shades of evening were rapidly darkening over the empty streets; and in the sky, which was cloudless and trans-

parently clear, the stars came gradually out one by one, until,

“As water does a sponge, so *their soft light*
Filled the void, hollow, universal air.”

Beautiful Evening (if we, as well as Augustus Tomlinson, may indulge in an apostrophe)! — beautiful Evening! — For thee all poets have had a song, and surrounded thee with rills and waterfalls and dews and flowers and sheep and bats and melancholy and owls; yet we must confess that to us, who in this very sentimental age are a bustling, worldly, hard-minded person, jostling our neighbors, and thinking of the main chance; to us, thou art never so charming as when we meet thee walking in thy gray hood, through the emptying streets, and among the dying sounds of a city. We love to feel the stillness, where all, two hours back, was clamor. We love to see the dingy abodes of Trade and Luxury, those restless patients of earth's constant fever, contrasted and canopied by a heaven full of purity and quietness and peace. We love to fill our thought with speculations on man, — even though the man be the muffin-man, — rather than with inanimate objects: hills and streams, — things to dream about, not to meditate on. Man is the subject of far nobler contemplation, of far more glowing hope, of a far purer and loftier vein of sentiment, than all the “floods and fells” in the universe; and that, sweet Evening! is one reason why we like that the earnest and tender thoughts thou excitest within us, should be rather surrounded by the labors and tokens of our species than by sheep and bats and melancholy and owls. But whether, most blessed Evening! thou delightest us in the country or in the town, thou equally disposest us to make and to feel love! — thou art the

cause of more marriages, and more divorces, than any other time in the twenty-four hours. Eyes that were common eyes to us before, touched by thy enchanting and magic shadows, become inspired, and preach to us of Heaven. A softness settles on features that were harsh to us while the sun shone; a mellow "light of love" reposes on the complexion, which by day we would have steeped "full fathom five" in the sea of Mrs. Gowland's lotion. What, then, thou modest hypocrite! to those who *already* and deeply love, — what, then, of danger and of paradise dost thou bring!

Silent, and stilling the breath which heaved in both quick and fitfully, Lucy and Clifford sat together. The streets were utterly deserted, and the loneliness, as they looked below, made them feel the more intensely not only the emotions which swelled within them, but the undefined and electric sympathy which, in uniting them, divided them from the world. The quiet around was broken by a distant strain of rude music; and, as it came nearer, two forms of no poetical order grew visible: the one was a poor blind man, who was drawing from his flute tones in which the melancholy beauty of the air compensated for any deficiency (the deficiency was but slight) in the execution. A woman much younger than the musician, and with something of beauty in her countenance, accompanied him, holding a tattered hat, and looking wistfully up at the windows of the silent street. We said two forms: we did the injustice of forgetfulness to another, — a rugged and simple friend, it is true, but one that both minstrel and wife had many and moving reasons to love. This was a little wiry terrier, with dark, piercing eyes, that glanced quickly and sagaciously in all quarters from beneath the shaggy covert that surrounded them. Slowly

the animal moved onward, pulling gently against the string by which he was held, and by which he guided his master. Once his fidelity was tempted: another dog invited him to play; the poor terrier looked anxiously and doubtfully round, and then, uttering a low growl of denial, pursued

“The noiseless tenor of his way.”

The little procession stopped beneath the window where Lucy and Clifford sat; for the quick eye of the woman had perceived them, and she laid her hand on the blind man's arm, and whispered him. He took the hint, and changed his air into one of love. Clifford glanced at Lucy, — her cheek was dyed in blushes. The air was over: another succeeded, — it was of the same kind; a third, — the burden was still unaltered; and then Clifford threw into the street a piece of money, and the dog wagged his abridged and dwarfed tail, and darting forward, picked it up in his mouth; and the woman (she had a kind face!) patted the officious friend even before she thanked the donor, and then she dropped the money with a cheering word or two into the blind man's pocket, and the three wanderers moved slowly on. Presently they came to a place where the street had been mended, and the stones lay scattered about. Here the woman no longer trusted to the dog's guidance, but anxiously hastened to the musician, and led him with evident tenderness and minute watchfulness over the rugged way. When they had passed the danger, the man stopped; and before he released the hand which had guided him, he pressed it gratefully, and then both the husband and the wife stooped down and caressed the dog. This little scene — one of those rough copies of the loveliness of human affections, of which so many are

scattered about the highways of the world — both the lovers had involuntarily watched; and now as they withdrew their eyes; those eyes settled on each other, — Lucy's swam in tears.

"To be loved and tended by the one I love," said Clifford, in a low voice, "I would walk blind and bare-foot over the whole earth!"

Lucy sighed very gently; and, placing her pretty hands (the one clasped over the other) upon her knee, looked down wistfully on them, but made no answer. Clifford drew his chair nearer, and gazed on her as she sat: the long, dark eyelash drooping over her eyes, and contrasting the ivory lids; her delicate profile half-turned from him, and borrowing a more touching beauty from the soft light that dwelt upon it; and her full yet still scarcely-developed bosom heaving at thoughts which she did not analyze, but was content to feel at once vague and delicious: he gazed and his lips trembled; he longed to speak, — he longed to say but those words which convey what volumes have endeavored to express, and have only weakened by detail, "*I love.*" How he resisted the yearnings of his heart we know not; but he did resist; and Lucy, after a confused and embarrassed pause, took up one of the poems on the table, and asked him some questions about a particular passage in an old ballad which he had once pointed to her notice. The passage related to a border chief, one of the Armstrongs of old, who, having been seized by the English and condemned to death, vented his last feelings in a passionate address to his own home, his rude tower, and his newly-wedded bride. "Do you believe," said Lucy, as their conversation began to flow, "that one so lawless and eager for bloodshed and strife as this robber is described to be, could be so capable of soft affections?"

"I do," said Clifford, "because he was not sensible that he was as criminal as you esteem him. If a man cherish the idea that his actions are not evil, he will retain at his heart all its better and gentler sensations as much as if he had never sinned. The savage murders his enemy, and when he returns home is not the less devoted to his friend, or the less anxious for his children. To harden and embrate the kindly dispositions, we must not only indulge in guilt, but feel that we are guilty. Oh! many that the world load with their opprobrium are capable of acts — nay, have committed acts — which in others the world would reverence and adore. Would you know whether a man's heart be shut to the power of love; ask what he is, — not to his foes, but to his friends! Crime, too," continued Clifford, speaking fast and vehemently, while his eyes flashed and the dark blood rushed to his cheek, — "crime: what is crime? Men embody their worst prejudices, their most evil passions, in a heterogeneous and contradictory code, and whatever breaks this code they term a crime. When they make no distinction in the penalty, — that is to say, in the estimation awarded both to murder and to a petty theft imposed on the weak will by famine, — we ask nothing else to convince us that they are ignorant of the very nature of guilt, and that they make up in ferocity for the want of wisdom."

Lucy looked in alarm at the animated and fiery countenance of the speaker. Clifford recovered himself after a moment's pause, and rose from his seat with the gay and frank laugh which made one of his peculiar characteristics. "There is a singularity in politics, Miss Brandon," said he, "which I daresay you have often observed, — namely, that those who are least important are always most noisy; and that the chief people who lose

their temper, are those who have nothing to gain in return."

As Clifford spoke, the doors were thrown open, and some visitors to Miss Brandon were announced. The good squire was still immersed in the vicissitudes of his game, and the sole task of receiving and entertaining the "company," as the chambermaids have it, fell, as usual, upon Lucy. Fortunately for her, Clifford was one of those rare persons who possess eminently the talents of society. There was much in his gay and gallant temperament, accompanied as it was with sentiment and ardor, that resembled our *beau idéal* of those chevaliers ordinarily peculiar to the Continent, — heroes equally in the drawing-room and the field. Observant, courteous, witty, and versed in the various accomplishments that combine (that most unfrequent of all unions!) vivacity with grace, he was especially formed for that brilliant world from which his circumstances tended to exclude him. Under different auspices, he might have been — pooh! We are running into a most pointless commonplace: what might any man be under auspices different from those by which his life has been guided? Music soon succeeded to conversation, and Clifford's voice was of necessity put into requisition. Miss Brandon had just risen from the harpsichord, as he sat down to perform his part; and she stood by him with the rest of the group while he sang. Only twice his eye stole to that spot which her breath and form made sacred to him, — once when he began, and once when he concluded his song. Perhaps the recollection of their conversation inspired him; certainly it dwelt upon his mind at the moment, threw a richer flush over his brow, and infused a more meaning and heartfelt softness into his tone.

STANZAS.

When I leave thee, oh ! ask not the world what that heart
Which adores thee, to others may be !
I know that I sin when from thee I depart,
But my guilt shall not light upon thee !

My life is a river which glasses a ray
That hath deigned to descend from above ;
Whatever the banks that o'ershadow its way,
It mirrors the light of thy love.

Though the waves may run high when the night wind awakes,
And hurries the stream to its fall ;
Though broken and wild be the billows it makes,
Thine image still trembles on all !

While this ominous love between Clifford and Lucy was thus finding fresh food in every interview and every opportunity, the unfortunate Mauleverer, firmly persuaded that his complaint was a relapse of what he termed the "Warlock dyspepsia," was waging dire war with the remains of the beef and pudding, which he tearfully assured his physicians "were lurking in his constitution." As Mauleverer, though complaisant, like most men of unmistakable rank, to all his acquaintances, whatever might be their grade, possessed but very few friends intimate enough to enter his sick-chamber, and none of that few were at Bath, it will readily be perceived that he was in blissful ignorance of the growing fortunes of his rival ; and to say the exact truth, illness, which makes a man's thoughts turn very much upon himself, banished many of the most tender ideas usually floating in his mind around the image of Lucy Brandon. His pill superseded his passion ; and he felt that there

are draughts in the world more powerful in their effects than those in the phials of Alcidonis.¹ He very often thought, it is true, how pleasant it would be for Lucy to smooth his pillow, and Lucy to prepare that mixture; but then, Mauleverer had an excellent valet, who hoped to play the part enacted by Gil Blas towards the honest Licentiate, and to nurse a legacy while he was nursing his master. And the earl, who was tolerably good-tempered, was forced to confess that it would be scarcely possible for any one "to know his ways better than Smoothson." Thus, during his illness, the fair form of his intended bride little troubled the peace of the noble adorer. And it was not till he found himself able to eat three good dinners consecutively, with a tolerable appetite, that Mauleverer recollected that he was violently in love. As soon as this idea was fully reinstated in his memory, and he had been permitted by his doctor to allow himself "a little cheerful society," Mauleverer resolved to go to the rooms for an hour or two.

It may be observed that most great personages have some favorite place, some cherished *Baiaë*, at which they love to throw off their state, and to play the amiable instead of the splendid; and Bath at that time, from its gayety, its ease, the variety of character to be found in its haunts, and the obliging manner in which such characters exposed themselves to ridicule, was exactly the place calculated to please a man like Mauleverer, who loved at once to be admired and to satirize. He was therefore an idolized person at the city of Bladud; and as he entered the rooms, he was surrounded by a whole band of imitators and sycophants, delighted to find his lordship looking so much better and declaring himself

¹ See Marmontel's pretty tale of "*Les Quatre Flaçons*."

so convalescent. As soon as the earl had bowed and smiled, and shaken hands sufficiently to sustain his reputation, he sauntered towards the dancers in search of Lucy. He found her not only exactly in the same spot in which he had last beheld her, but dancing with exactly the same partner who had before provoked all the gallant nobleman's jealousy and wrath. Mauleverer, though not by any means addicted to preparing his compliments beforehand, had just been conning a delicate speech for Lucy; but no sooner did the person of her partner flash on him than the whole flattery vanished at once from his recollection. He felt himself grow pale; and when Lucy turned, and, seeing him near, addressed him in the anxious and soft tone which she thought due to her uncle's friend on his recovery, Mauleverer bowed, confused and silent; and that green-eyed passion, which would have convulsed the *mind* of a true lover, altering a little the course of its fury, effectually disturbed the *manner* of the courtier.

Retreating to an obscure part of the room, where he could see all without being conspicuous, Mauleverer now employed himself in watching the motions and looks of the young pair. He was naturally a penetrating and quick observer, and in this instance jealousy sharpened his talents: he saw enough to convince him that Lucy was already attached to Clifford; and being, by that conviction, fully persuaded that Lucy was necessary to his own happiness, he resolved to lose not a moment in banishing Captain Clifford from her presence, or at least, in instituting such inquiries into that gentleman's relatives, rank, and respectability, as would, he hoped, render such banishment a necessary consequence of the research.

Fraught with this determination, Mauleverer repaired

at once to the retreat of the squire, and, engaging him in conversation, bluntly asked him, "Who the deuce Miss Brandon was dancing with?"

The squire, a little piqued at this *brusquerie*, replied by a long eulogium on Paul; and Mauleverer, after hearing it throughout with the blandest smile imaginable, told the squire, very politely, that he was sure Mr. Brandon's good-nature had misled him. "Clifford!" said he, repeating the name, — "Clifford! it is one of those names which are particularly selected by persons nobody knows: first, because the name is good; and, secondly, because it is common. My long and dear friendship with your brother makes me feel peculiarly anxious on any point relative to his niece; and, indeed, my dear William, overrating, perhaps, my knowledge of the world, and my influence in society, — but not my affection for him, — besought me to assume the liberty of esteeming myself a friend, nay, even a relation of yours and Miss Brandon's; so that I trust you do not consider my caution impertinent."

The flattered squire assured him that he was particularly honored, so far from deeming his lordship (which never could be the case with people so distinguished as *his lordship was especially!*) *impertinent*.

Lord Mauleverer, encouraged by this speech, artfully renewed, and succeeded, if not in convincing the squire that the handsome captain was a suspicious character, at least in persuading him that common prudence required that he should find out exactly who the handsome captain was, especially as he was in the habit of dining with the squire thrice a week, and dancing with Lucy every night.

"See," said Mauleverer, "he approaches you now: I will retreat to the chair by the fireplace, and you shall

cross-examine him, — I have no doubt you will do it with the utmost delicacy."

So saying, Mauleverer took possession of a seat where he was not absolutely beyond hearing (slightly deaf as he was) of the ensuing colloquy, though the position of his seat screened him from sight. Mauleverer was esteemed a man of the most punctilious honor in private life, and he would not have been seen in the act of listening to other people's conversation for the world.

Hemming with an air, and resettling himself as Clifford approached, the squire thus skilfully commenced the attack: "Ah, ha! my good Captain Clifford, and how do you do? I saw you (and I am *very glad, my friend, as every one else is, to see you*) *at a distance*. And where have you left my daughter?"

"Miss Brandon is dancing with Mr. Muskwell, sir," answered Clifford.

"Oh! she is! — Mr. Muskwell, — humph! Good family the Muskwells, — came from Primrose Hall. Pray, captain, — not that I want to know for my own sake, for I am a strange, odd person, I believe, and I am thoroughly convinced (some people are censorious, and others, thank God, are not!) of your respectability, — what family do you come from? You won't think my — my caution impertinent?" added the shrewd old gentleman, borrowing that phrase which he thought so friendly in the mouth of Lord Mauleverer.

Clifford colored for a moment, but replied, with a quiet archness of look, "Family! oh, my dear sir, I come from an old family, — a very old family indeed."

"So I always thought; and in what part of the world?"

"Scotland, sir: all our family come from Scotland, — namely, all who live long do; the rest die young."

"Ay, particular air does agree with particular constitutions. I, for instance, could not live in all countries; not — you take me — in the North!"

"Few honest men *can* live there," said Clifford, dryly.

"And," resumed the squire, a little embarrassed by the nature of his task, and the cool assurance of his young friend, — "and pray, Captain Clifford, what regiment do you belong to?"

"Regiment? — oh, the Rifles!" answered Clifford. ("Deuce is in me," muttered he, "if I can resist a jest, though I break my neck over it.")

"A very gallant body of men?" said the squire.

"No doubt of that, sir!" rejoined Clifford.

"And do you think, Captain Clifford," renewed the squire, "that it is a good corps for getting on?"

"It is rather a bad one for getting off," muttered the captain; and then aloud, "Why, we have not much interest at court, sir."

"Oh, but then there is a wider scope, as my brother the lawyer says, — and no man knows better, — for merit. I daresay you have seen many a man elevated from the ranks?"

"Nothing more common, sir, than such elevation; and so great is the virtue of our corps, that I have also known not a few willing to transfer the honor to their comrades."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed the squire, opening his eyes at such disinterested magnanimity.

"But," said Clifford, who began to believe he might carry the equivoque too far, and who thought, despite of his jesting, that it was possible to strike out a more

agreeable vein of conversation, — “but, sir, if you remember, you have not yet finished that youthful hunting-adventure of yours, when the hounds lost at Burnham Copse.”

“Oh, very true,” cried the squire, quite forgetting his late suspicions; and forthwith he began a story that promised to be as long as the chase it recorded. So charmed was he, when he had finished it, with the character of the gentleman who had listened to it so delightedly, that on rejoining Mauleverer, he told the earl, with an important air, that he had strictly examined the young captain, and that he had fully convinced himself of the excellence of his family, as well as the rectitude of his morals. Mauleverer listened with a countenance of polite incredulity; he had heard but little of the conversation that had taken place between the pair; but on questioning the squire upon sundry particulars of Clifford’s birth, parentage, and property, he found him exactly as ignorant as before. The courtier, however, seeing further expostulation was in vain, contented himself with patting the squire’s shoulder, and saying, with a mysterious urbanity, “Ah, sir, you are too good!”

With these words he turned on his heel, and, not yet despairing, sought the daughter. He found Miss Brandon just released from dancing, and, with a kind of paternal gallantry, he offered his arm to parade the apartments. After some preliminary flourish, and reference, for the thousandth time, to his friendship for William Brandon, the earl spoke to her about that “fine-looking young man, who called himself Captain Clifford.”

Unfortunately, for Mauleverer, he grew a little too unguarded, as his resentment against the interference of

Clifford warmed with his language, and he dropped in his anger one or two words of caution, which especially offended the delicacy of Miss Brandon.

"Take care how I encourage, my lord!" said Lucy, with glowing cheeks, repeating the words which had so affronted her, "I really must beg you —"

"You mean, dear Miss Brandon," interrupted Mauleverer, squeezing her hand with respectful tenderness, "that you must beg me to apologize for my inadvertent expression. I do most sincerely. If I had felt less interest in your happiness, believe me, I should have been more guarded in my language."

Miss Brandon bowed stiffly, and the courtier saw, with secret rage, that the country beauty was not easily appeased, even by an apology from Lord Mauleverer. "I have seen the time," thought he, "when young unmarried ladies would have deemed *an affront* from me an honor! They would have gone into hysterics at an *apology*!" Before he had time to make his peace, the squire joined them, and Lucy, taking her father's arm, expressed her wish to return home. The squire was delighted at the proposition. It would have been but civil in Mauleverer to offer his assistance in those little attentions preparatory to female departure from balls. He hesitated for a moment: "It keeps one so long in those cursed thorough draughts," thought he, shivering. "Besides, it is just possible that I may not marry her, and it is no good risking a cold (above all, at the beginning of winter) for nothing!" Fraught with this prudential policy Mauleverer then resigned Lucy to her father, and murmuring in her ear that "her displeasure made him the most wretched of men," concluded his adieu by a bow penitentially graceful.

About five minutes afterwards he himself withdrew. As he was wrapping his corporeal treasure in his *roque-laire* of sables, previous to immersing himself in his chair, he had the mortification of seeing Lucy, who, with her father, from some cause or other, had been delayed in the hall, handed to the carriage by Captain Clifford. Had the earl watched more narrowly than in the anxious cares due to himself he was enabled to do, he would, to his consolation, have noted that Lucy gave her hand with an averted and cool air, and that Clifford's expressive features bore rather the aspect of mortification than triumph.

He did not, however, see more than the action; and as he was borne homeward with his flambeaux and footmen preceding him, and the watchful Smoothson by the side of the little vehicle, he muttered his determination of writing by the very next post to Brandon, all his anger for Lucy, and all his jealousy of her evident lover.

While this doughty resolve was animating the great soul of Mauleverer, Lucy reached her own room, bolted the door, and, throwing herself on her bed, burst into a long and bitter paroxysm of tears. So unusual were such visitors to her happy and buoyant temper, that there was something almost alarming in the earnestness and obstinacy with which she now wept.

"What!" said she, bitterly, "have I placed my affections upon a man of uncertain character, and is my infatuation so clear that an acquaintance dare hint at its imprudence? And yet his manner, his tone! No, no; there can be no reason for shame in loving him!" And as she said this, her heart smote her for the coldness of her manner towards Clifford on his taking leave of her for the evening.

"Am I," she thought, weeping yet more vehemently than before, — "am I so worldly, so base, as to feel altered towards him the moment I hear a syllable breathed against his name? Should I not, on the contrary, have clung to his image with a greater love, if he were attacked by others? But my father, my dear father, and my kind, prudent uncle, — something is due to them; and they would break their hearts if I loved one whom they deemed unworthy. Why should I not summon courage, and tell him of the suspicions respecting him? One candid word would dispel them. Surely it would be but kind in me towards him to give him an opportunity of disproving all false and dishonoring conjectures. And why this reserve, when so often, by look and hint, if not by open avowal, he has declared that he loves me, and knows — he *must* know — that he is not indifferent to me? Why does he never speak of his parents, his relations, his home?"

And Lucy, as she asked this question, drew from a bosom whose hue and shape might have rivalled hers who won Cymon to be wise,¹ a drawing which she herself had secretly made of her lover, and which, though artificially and even rudely done, yet had caught the inspiration of memory, and breathed the very features and air that were stamped already ineffaceably upon a heart too holy for so sullied an idol. She gazed upon the portrait as if it could answer her question of the original; and, as she looked, and looked, her tears slowly ceased, and her innocent countenance relapsed gradually into its usual and eloquent serenity. Never, perhaps, could Lucy's own portrait have been taken at a more favorable moment. The unconscious grace of her attitude, her dress loosened, the modest and youthful

¹ See Dryden's poem of "Cymon and Iphigenia."

voluptuousness of her beauty; the tender cheek to which the virgin bloom, banished for a while, was now all glowingly returning; the little, white, soft hand on which that cheek leaned, while the other contained the picture upon which her eyes fed; the half-smile just conjured to her full, red, dewy lips, and gone the moment after, yet again restored; all made a picture of such enchanting loveliness, that we question whether Shakespeare himself could have fancied an earthly shape more meet to embody the vision of a Miranda or a Viola. The quiet and maiden neatness of the apartment gave effect to the charm; and there was a poetry even in the snowy furniture of the bed, the shutters partly unclosed and admitting a glimpse of the silver moon, and the solitary lamp just contending with the purer ray of the skies, and so throwing a mixed and softened light around the chamber.

She was yet gazing on the drawing, when a faint stream of music stole through the air beneath her window, and it gradually rose till the sound of a guitar became distinct and clear, suiting with, not disturbing the moonlit stillness of the night. The gallantry and romance of a former day, though at the time of our story subsiding, were not quite dispelled; and nightly serenades under the casements of a distinguished beauty were by no means of unfrequent occurrence. But Lucy, as the music floated upon her ear, blushed deeper and deeper, as if it had a dearer source to her heart than ordinary gallantry; and raising herself on one arm from her incumbent position, she leaned forward to catch the sound with a greater and more unerring certainty.

After a prelude of some moments, a clear and sweet voice accompanied the instrument, and the words of the song were as follows: —

CLIFFORD'S SERENADE.

There is a world where every night
My spirit meets and walks with thine ;
And hopes — I dare not tell thee — light
Like stars of Love — that world of mine !

Sleep ! — to the waking world my heart
Hath now, methinks, a stranger grown :
Ah, sleep ! that I may feel thou art
Within *one* world that is my own.

As the music died away, Lucy sank back once more, and the drawing which she held was pressed (with cheeks glowing, though unseen, at the act) to her lips. And though the character of her lover was uncleared, though she herself had come to no distinct resolution even to inform him of the rumors against his name, yet so easily restored was her trust in him, and so soothing the very thought of his vigilance and his love, that before an hour had passed her eyes were closed in sleep; the drawing was laid, as a spell against grief, under her pillow; and in her dreams she murmured *his* name, and, unconscious of reality and the future, smiled tenderly as she did so!

CHAPTER XIX.

Come, the plot thickens ! and another fold
Of the warm cloak of mystery wraps us around.

And for their loves ?

Behold the seal is on them !

Tanner of Tyburn.

WE must not suppose that Clifford's manner and tone were towards Lucy Brandon such as they seemed to others. Love refines every roughness; and that truth which nurtures tenderness is never barren of grace. Whatever the habits and comrades of Clifford's life, he had at heart many good and generous qualities. They were not often perceptible, it is true, — first, because he was of a gay and reckless turn; secondly, because he was not easily affected by any external circumstances; and, thirdly, because he had the policy to affect among his comrades only such qualities as were likely to give him influence with them. Still, however, his better genius broke out whenever an opportunity presented itself. Though no "Corsair," romantic and unreal, an Ossianic shadow becoming more vast in proportion as it recedes from substance; though no grandly-imagined lie to the fair proportions of human nature, but an erring man in a very prosaic and homely world, Clifford still mingled a certain generosity and chivalric spirit of enterprise even with the practices of his profession. Although the name of Lovett, by which he was chiefly known, was one peculiarly distinguished in the annals of the adventurous, it had never been coupled with rumors of cruelty

or outrage; and it was often associated with anecdotes of courage, courtesy, good-humor, or forbearance. He was one whom a real love was peculiarly calculated to soften and to redeem. The boldness, the candor, the unselfishness of his temper, were components of nature upon which affection invariably takes a strong and deep hold. Besides, Clifford was of an eager and aspiring turn; and the same temper and abilities which had in a very few years raised him in influence and popularity far above all the chivalric band with whom he was connected, when once inflamed and elevated by a higher passion, were likely to arouse his ambition from the level of his present pursuits, and reform him, ere too late, into a useful, nay, even an honorable member of society. We trust that the reader has already perceived that, despite his early circumstances, his manner and address were not such as to unfit him for a lady's love. The comparative refinement of his exterior is easy of explanation, for he possessed a natural and inborn gentility, a quick turn for observation, a ready sense both of the ridiculous and the graceful; and these are materials which are soon and lightly wrought from coarseness into polish. He had been thrown, too, among the leaders and heroes of his band; many not absolutely low in birth, nor debased in habit. He had associated with the Barringtons of the day: gentlemen who were admired at Ranelagh, and made speeches worthy of Cicero when they were summoned to trial. He had played his part in public places; and, as Tomlinson was wont to say after his classic fashion, "the triumphs accomplished in the field had been planned in the ball-room." In short, he was one of those accomplished and elegant highwaymen of whom we yet read wonders, and by whom it would have been delightful to have been robbed; and

the aptness of intellect which grew into wit with his friends, softened into sentiment with his mistress. There is something, too, in beauty (and Clifford's person, as we have before said, was possessed of even uncommon attractions) which lifts a beggar into nobility; and there was a distinction in his gait and look which supplied the air of rank, and the tone of courts. Men, indeed, skilled like Mauleverer in the subtleties of manner, might perhaps have easily detected in him the want of that indescribable essence possessed only by persons reared in good society; but that want, being shared by so many persons of indisputable birth and fortune, conveyed no particular reproach. To Lucy, indeed, brought up in seclusion, and seeing at Warlock none calculated to refine her taste in the fashion of an air or phrase to a very fastidious standard of perfection, this want was perfectly imperceptible: she remarked in her lover only a figure everywhere unequalled, an eye always eloquent with admiration, a step from which grace could never be divorced, a voice that spoke in a silver key, and uttered flatteries delicate in thought and poetical in word; even a certain originality of mind, remark, and character, occasionally approaching to the *bizarre*, yet sometimes also to the elevated, possessed a charm for the imagination of a young and not unenthusiastic female, and contrasted favorably, rather than the reverse, with the dull insipidity of those she ordinarily saw. Nor are we sure that the mystery thrown about him, irksome as it was to her, and discreditable as it appeared to others, was altogether ineffectual in increasing her love for the adventurer; and thus Fate, which transmutes in her magic crucible all opposing metals into that one which she is desirous to produce, swelled the wealth of an ill-placed and ominous passion by the

very circumstances which should have counteracted and destroyed it.

We are willing, by what we have said, not to defend Clifford, but to redeem Lucy in the opinion of our readers for loving so unwisely; and when they remember her youth, her education, her privation of a mother, of all female friendship, even of the vigilant and unrelaxing care of some protector of the opposite sex, we do not think that what was so natural will be considered by any inexcusable.

Mauleverer woke the morning after the ball in better health than usual, and consequently more in love than ever. According to his resolution the night before, he sat down to write a long letter to William Brandon; it was amusing and witty as usual; but the wily nobleman succeeded, under the cover of wit, in conveying to Brandon's mind a serious apprehension lest his cherished matrimonial project should altogether fail. The account of Lucy and of Captain Clifford contained in the epistle, instilled, indeed, a double portion of sourness into the professionally acrid mind of the lawyer; and as it so happened that he read the letter just before attending the court upon a case in which he was counsel to the crown, the witnesses on the opposite side of the question felt the full effects of the barrister's ill-humor.

The case was one in which the defendant had been engaged in swindling transactions to a very large amount; and amongst his agents and assistants was a person of the very lowest orders, — but who, seemingly enjoying large connections, and possessing natural acuteness and address, appeared to have been of great use in receiving and disposing of such goods as were fraudulently obtained. As a witness against the latter person appeared a pawnbroker, who produced certain

articles that had been pledged to him at different times by this humble agent. Now, Brandon, in examining the guilty go-between, became the more terribly severe, in proportion as the man evinced that semblance of unconscious stolidity which the lower orders can so ingeniously assume, and which is so peculiarly adapted to enrage and to baffle the gentlemen of the bar. At length, Brandon entirely subduing and quelling the stubborn hypocrisy of the culprit, the man turned towards him a look between wrath and beseechingness, muttering:—

“Aha! — *if* so be, Counsellor Prandon, you knew vat I knows, you vould not go for to bully *I* so!”

“And pray, my good fellow, what is it that you know that should make me treat you as if I thought you an honest man?”

The witness had now relapsed into sullenness, and only answered by a sort of grunt. Brandon, who knew well how to sting a witness into communicativeness, continued his questioning, till the witness, rearoused into anger, and, it may be, into indiscretion, said, in a low voice, —

“Hax Mr. Swoppem” (the pawnbroker) “what I sold ’im on the 15th hof February, exactly twenty-three yearn ago?”

Brandon started back, his lips grew white, he clenched his hands with a convulsive spasm; and while all his features seemed distorted with an earnest yet fearful intensity of expectation, he poured forth a volley of questions so incoherent and so irrelevant, that he was immediately called to order by his learned brother on the opposite side. Nothing farther could be extracted from the witness. The pawnbroker was resummoned: he appeared somewhat disconcerted by an appeal to his

memory so far back as twenty-three years; but, after taking some time to consider, during which the agitation of the usually cold and possessed Brandon was remarkable to all the court, he declared that he recollected no transaction whatsoever with the witness at that time. In vain were all Brandon's efforts to procure a more elucidatory answer. The pawnbroker was impenetrable, and the lawyer was compelled reluctantly to dismiss him. The moment the witness left the box, Brandon sank into a gloomy abstraction, — he seemed quite to forget the business and the duties of the court; and so negligently did he continue to conclude the case, so purposeless was the rest of his examination and cross-examination, that the cause was entirely marred, and a verdict "Not guilty" returned by the jury.

The moment he left the court, Brandon repaired to the pawnbroker's, and, after a conversation with Mr. Swoppem, in which he satisfied that honest tradesman that his object was rather to reward than intimidate, Swoppem confessed that, twenty-three years ago, the witness had met him at a public-house in Devereux Court, in company with two other men, and sold him several articles in plate, ornaments, etc. The great bulk of these articles had, of course, long left the pawnbroker's abode; but he still thought a stray trinket or two — not of sufficient worth to be reset or remodelled, nor of sufficient fashion to find a ready sale — lingered in his drawers. Eagerly, and with trembling hands, did Brandon toss over the motley contents of the mahogany reservoirs which the pawnbroker now submitted to his scrutiny. Nothing on earth is so melancholy a prospect as a pawnbroker's drawer! Those little, quaint, valueless ornaments; those true-lovers'-knots, those oval locketts, those battered rings, girdled by initials, or some

brief inscription of regard or of grief, — what tales of past affections, hopes, and sorrows, do they not tell! But no sentiment of so general a sort ever saddened the hard mind of William Brandon, and now less than at any time could such reflections have occurred to him. Impatiently he threw on the table, one after another, the baubles once hoarded, perchance, with the tenderest respect, till at length his eyes sparkled, and with a nervous gripe he seized upon an old ring, which was inscribed with letters, and circled a heart containing hair. The inscription was simply, "W. B. to Julia." Strange and dark was the expression that settled on Brandon's face as he regarded this seemingly worthless trinket. After a moment's gaze, he uttered an inarticulate exclamation, and thrusting it into his pocket, renewed his search. He found one or two other trifles of a similar nature; one was an ill-done miniature set in silver, and bearing at the back sundry half-effaced letters, which Brandon construed at once (though no other eye could) into "Sir John Brandon, 1635, ætat. 28;" the other was a seal stamped with the noble crest of the house of Brandon, "A bull's head, ducally crowned and armed, Or." As soon as Brandon had possessed himself of these treasures, and arrived at the conviction that the place held no more, he assured the conscientious Swoppem of his regard for that person's safety, rewarded him munificently, and went his way to Bow Street for a warrant against the witness who had commended him to the pawnbroker. On his road thither, a new resolution occurred to him: "Why make all public," he muttered to himself, "if it *can* be avoided? — and it *may* be avoided!" He paused a moment, — then retraced his way to the pawnbroker's, and, after a brief mandate to Mr. Swoppem, returned home. In the course of the

same evening, the witness we refer to was brought to the lawyer's house by Mr. Swoppem, and there held a long and private conversation with Brandon; the result of this seemed a compact to their mutual satisfaction, for the man went away safe, with a heavy purse and a light heart, although sundry shades and misgivings did certainly ever and anon cross the latter; while Brandon flung himself back in his seat with the triumphant air of one who has accomplished some great measure, and his dark face betrayed in every feature a joyousness and hope which were unfrequent guests, it must be owned, either to his countenance or his heart.

So good a man of business, however, was William Brandon, that he allowed not the event of that day to defer beyond the night his attention to his designs for the aggrandizement of his niece and house. By day-break the next morning, he had written to Lord Mauleverer, to his brother, and to Lucy. To the last, his letter, couched in all the anxiety of fondness, and the caution of affectionate experience, was well calculated to occasion that mingled shame and soreness which the wary lawyer rightly judged would be the most effectual enemy to an incipient passion. "I have accidentally heard," he wrote, "from a friend of mine, just arrived from Bath, of the glaring attentions paid to you by a Captain Clifford; I will not, my dearest niece, wound you by repeating what also I heard of your manner in receiving them. I know the ill-nature and the envy of the world; and I do not for a moment imagine that my Lucy, of whom I am so justly proud, would countenance, from a petty coquetry, the advances of one whom she could never marry, or evince to any suitor partiality unknown to her relations, and certainly placed in a quarter which could never receive their approbation.

I do not credit the reports of the idle, my dear niece; but if I discredit, you must not slight them. I call upon your prudence, your delicacy, your discretion, your sense of right, at once, and effectually, to put a stop to all impertinent rumors: dance with this young man no more; do not let him be of your party in any place of amusement, public or private; avoid even seeing him if you are able, and throw in your manner towards him that decided coldness which the world cannot mistake." Much more did the skilful uncle write; but all to the same purpose, and for the furtherance of the same design. His letter to his brother was no less artful. He told him at once that Lucy's preference of the suit of a handsome fortune-hunter was the public talk, and besought him to lose not a moment in quelling the rumor. "You may do so easily," he wrote, "by avoiding the young man; and should he be very importunate, return at once to Warlock; your daughter's welfare must be dearer to you than anything."

To Mauleverer, Brandon replied by a letter, which turned first on public matters, and then slid carelessly into the subject of the earl's information.

Among the admonitions which he ventured to give Mauleverer, he dwelt, not without reason, on the want of tact displayed by the earl, in not manifesting that pomp and show which his station in life enabled him to do. "Remember," he urged, "you are not among your equals, by whom unnecessary parade begins to be considered an ostentatious vulgarity. The surest method of dazzling our inferiors is by splendor,—not taste. All young persons—all women in particular—are caught by show, and enamored of magnificence. Assume a greater state, and you will be more talked of; and notoriety wins a woman's heart more than beauty or youth. You

have, forgive me, played the boy too long: a certain dignity becomes your manhood; women will not respect you if you suffer yourself to become 'stale and cheap to vulgar company.' You are like a man who has fifty advantages, and uses only one of them to gain his point, when you rely on your conversation and your manner, and throw away the resources of your wealth and your station. Any private gentleman may be amiable and witty; but any private gentleman cannot call to his aid the Aladdin's lamp possessed in England by a wealthy peer. Look to this, my dear lord: Lucy at heart is vain, or she is not a woman. Dazzle her, then,—dazzle! Love may be blind, but it must be made so by excess of light. You have a country house within a few miles of Bath. Why not take up your abode there, instead of in a paltry lodging in the town? Give sumptuous entertainments; make it necessary for all the world to attend them,—exclude, of course, this Captain Clifford; you will then meet Lucy without a rival. At present, excepting only your title, you fight on a level ground with this adventurer, instead of an eminence from which you could in an instant sweep him away. Nay, he is stronger than you; he has the opportunities afforded by a partnership in balls where you cannot appear to advantage; he is, you say, in the first bloom of youth,—he is handsome. Reflect! your destiny, so far as Lucy is concerned, is in your hands. I turn to other subjects," etc.

As Brandon re-read, ere he signed this last letter, a bitter smile sat on his harsh, yet handsome features. "If," said he, mentally, "I can effect this object,—if Mauleverer does marry this girl, why so much the better that she has another, a fairer, and a more welcome lover. By the great principle of scorn within me, which has

enabled me to sneer at what weaker minds adore, and make a foot-stool of that worldly honor which fools set up as a throne, it would be to me more sweet than fame — ay, or even than power — to see this fine-spun lord a gibe in the mouths of men, — a cuckold, a cuckold!" and as he said the last word, Brandon laughed outright. "And he thinks, too," added he, "that he is sure of my fortune; otherwise, perhaps, he, the goldsmith's descendant, would not dignify our house with his proposals; but he may err there, — he may err there;" and, finishing his soliloquy, Brandon finished also his letter by, "Adieu, my dear lord, your most affectionate friend!"

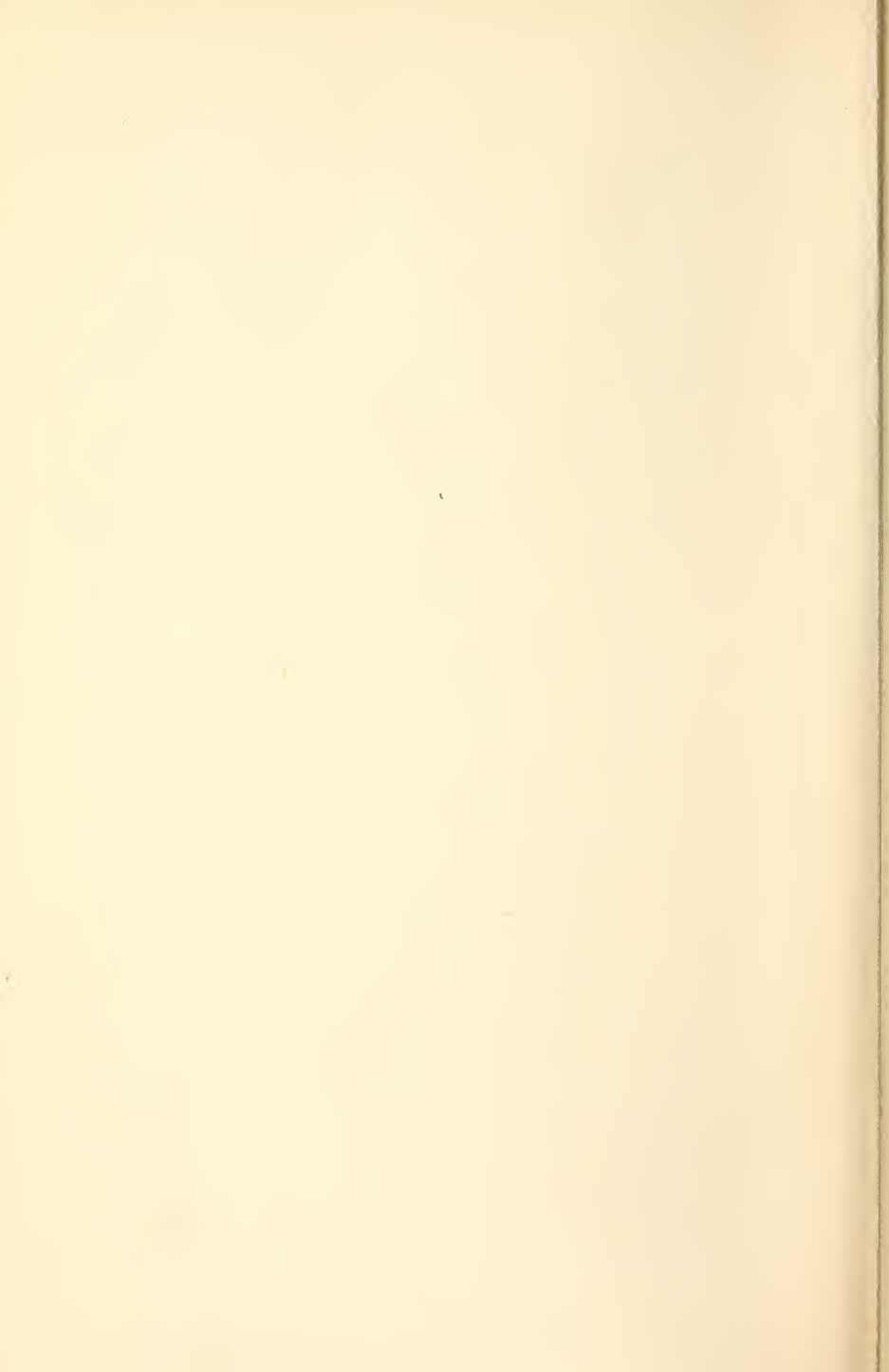
It is not difficult to conjecture the effect produced upon Lucy by Brandon's letter: it made her wretched; she refused for days to go out; she shut herself up in her apartment, and consumed the time in tears and struggles with her own heart. Sometimes what she conceived to be her duty conquered, and she resolved to forswear her lover; but the night undid the labor of the day: for at night, every night, the sound of her lover's voice, accompanied by music, melted away her resolution, and made her once more all tenderness and trust. The words, too, sung under her window, were especially suited to affect her; they breathed a melancholy which touched her the more from its harmony with her own thoughts: one while they complained of absence, at another they hinted at neglect; but there was always in them a tone of humiliation, not reproach; they bespoke a sense of unworthiness in the lover, and confessed that even the love was a crime; and in proportion as they owned the want of desert, did Lucy more firmly cling to the belief that her lover was deserving.

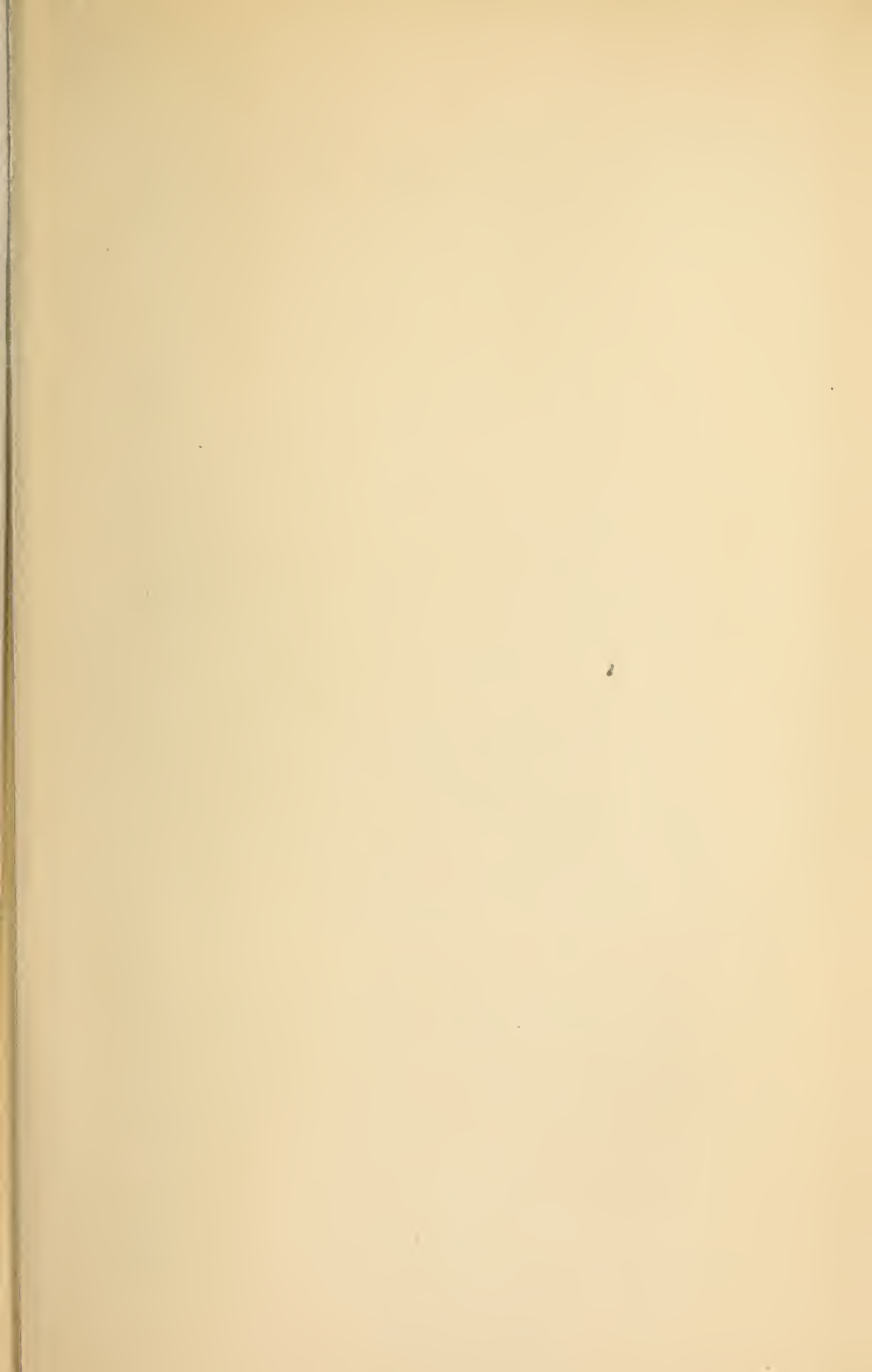
The old squire was greatly disconcerted by his brother's letter, though, impressed with the idea of self-consequence, and the love of tolerably pure blood, common to most country squires, he was by no means ambitious for his daughter. On the contrary, the same feeling which at Warlock had made him choose his companions among the inferior gentry, made him averse to the thought of a son-in-law from the peerage. In spite of Mauleverer's good-nature, the very ease of the earl annoyed him, and he never felt at home in his society. To Clifford he had a great liking; and, having convinced himself that there was nothing to suspect in the young gentleman, he saw no earthly reason why so agreeable a companion should not be an agreeable son-in-law. "If he be poor," thought the squire, "though he does not seem so, Lucy is rich!" And this truism appeared to him to answer every objection. Nevertheless, William Brandon possessed a remarkable influence over the weaker mind of his brother; and the squire, though with great reluctance, resolved to adopt his advice. He shut his doors against Clifford, and, when he met him in the streets, instead of greeting him with his wonted cordiality, he passed him with a hasty "Good-day, captain!" which, after the first day or two, merged into a distant bow. Whenever very good-hearted people are rude, and unjustly so, the rudeness is in the extreme. The squire felt it so irksome to be less familiar than heretofore with Clifford, that his only remaining desire was now to drop him altogether; and to this consummation of acquaintance the gradually cooling salute appeared rapidly approaching. Meanwhile Clifford, unable to see Lucy, shunned by her father, and obtaining, in answer to all inquiry, rude looks from the footman, whom nothing but the most resolute command over his muscles

prevented him from knocking down, began to feel, perhaps for the first time in his life, that an equivocal character is at least no equivocal misfortune. To add to his distress, "the earnings of his previous industry" — we use the expression cherished by the wise Tomlinson — waxed gradually less and less beneath the expenses of Bath; and the murmuring voices of his two comrades began already to reproach their chief for his inglorious idleness, and to hint at the necessity of a speedy exertion.

END OF VOL. I.









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